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THE STORY OF THE SPHINX.

—
BY EMMA J. ARNOLD.
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ONCE upon a time, Prince Tehuti-mes, the son of the King of Egypt, went on a hunting expedition in the desert which stretches behind the Pyramids. On your map of Africa you will find Egypt in the right-hand upper corner, and near the city of Cairo you will see three little triangular figures marked "Pyramids of Gizeh." It was in the desert country to the left of these pyramids that Prince Tehuti-mes went hunting. From early dawn till midday he spent the hours shooting brazen bolts at a target, and hunting lions in the Valley of the Gazelles. A servant was with him, and they rode on a two-wheeled chariot with a span of horses "swifter than the wind."

Now, it must have been very hot work hunting lions in a desert, where there are no trees and the ground is all sand. In Egypt it seldom rains. No clouds shade the sun, whose burning rays beat down hour after hour and make the sands very hot.

Well, by noon-time Tehuti-mes was hot and exceedingly tired by his exertions, so he said to his servant:

"Drive me back as far as the Sphinx. There is a nice long shadow under his chin, and it will be a fine, cool place to take a nap."

You may believe people in a desert are generally glad if they can find a shadow, be it ever

so small a one. Now, I suppose you are wondering what kind of an object it was whose chin cast a shadow large enough to cover Prince Tehuti-mes; so I will tell you about the great figure known as the Sphinx.

Long, long ago—five or six thousands of years ago—the little country of Egypt, whose whole territory, desert and all, is only about twice the size of the State of Illinois, was yet the greatest kingdom on the earth. That certainly was more than five thousand years before Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered America. Egypt had a large population even then. Thousands, perhaps millions, of people swarmed along the banks of the river Nile, and rowed their little boats in and out of the network of canals which led the waters of the "sacred river" between the cultivated fields. The religion of these people was what we call "polytheism"—that is, the worship of many gods. The Egyptians, like all pagan nations, made images of their gods, and built temples where they might be worshiped. It was the business of the priests to carry on this worship, and a very profitable business they made of it, too.

When the Egyptians saw how beautiful and bright the sun was, and how at his rising each morning the ugly black darkness disappeared,

they thought that he, too, must be a god, and so they worshiped him among the rest. Some among the Egyptians thought that the sun-god died every night when he set in the west, and came to life again the next morning; others believed that he spent the night-hours fighting against evil spirits and horrible monsters who tried to kill him. But he always conquered them, and the next morning there he was in the east again, and rose anew, as bright and beautiful as ever, to give light and warmth to the earth.

Now, the Egyptians had many names for their sun-god, among these, one for the rising sun, one for the midday sun, and one for the sun when he set in the west. The rising-sun god was called *Hor-em-akhu*, which means in English, "Horus-on-the-horizon." The very biggest idol they ever made was to represent this sun-god. It is what we call the "Great Sphinx of Gizeh." No-one knows who made this Sphinx, or when it was made; but, in all likelihood, it was already there in the desert more than six thousand years ago, when the first King of Egypt whom we know anything about ruled over the country.

No temple was ever built over *Hor-em-akhu*. He is too immense. He is one hundred and ninety feet long and sixty-five feet high. His head would reach above the top of a six-story house. His face is thirteen and a half feet wide, and between his lips, if he could open them, you might drive a good-sized carriage, and have room to spare on each side. A portion of his body is an immense rock which lay partly out of the sand. The Egyptian workmen put upon it bricks and plaster enough to give it the shape of a lion; and on the neck of this lion they placed a man's head, surmounted with a royal crown. A great stone beard hung from the Sphinx's chin, and I suspect that in the shadow cast by this beard Prince Tehuti-mes took his noonday nap.

The Egyptian people thought they could not have any better place to bury their dead than near the image of their beautiful sun-god. So, year after year, the kings and the princes and the nobles made their graves in the desert land. And it is thus in the midst of a great cemetery that you would find the Sphinx, if you should go now to look at him.

Not far from this cemetery was once a great city called Memphis. Sixty centuries ago it was the capital city of Egypt. It had thousands of houses, and magnificent temples and obelisks, besides a famous citadel, in which were kept a great many soldiers to guard the city. But to-day, if you should visit the place where this famous city once stood, you would see nothing but mounds of earth with palm-trees growing upon them, and here and there, scattered over the ground, blocks of stone, which are all there is left of those magnificent buildings built and adorned by the kings of Egypt.

Now, the burial-ground in which the Sphinx is was the cemetery of Memphis, and it stretched for forty miles along the river Nile. In it there were over sixty pyramids, which are the big tombs built by the kings. The nobles and the princes also built very large tombs, the walls of which are covered with colored pictures, very beautiful to look at.

But you have not yet learned whether Prince Tehuti-mes took his nap. He went to sleep, and he dreamed; and it seemed to him that the god in whose shadow he lay opened his great stone lips and spoke to him; and this is what the god said:

"Behold me! Look upon me, my son Tehuti-mes! I am thy father, *Hor-em-akhu*. Thou shalt be a mighty king, and rule over all the land. The whole world shall be thine in its length and in its breadth, as far as the light of the eye of the Lord of the Universe shines. Plenty and riches shall be thine. Long years shall be granted thee as thy term of life. My heart clings to thee.

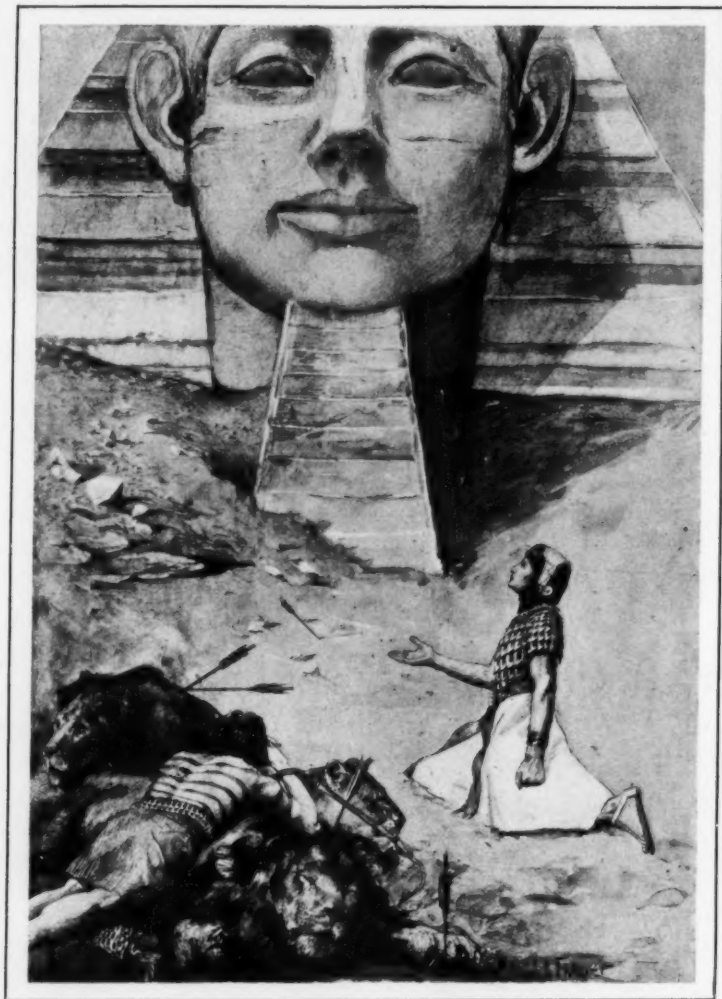
"But the sand of the desert has covered me up. Promise me that thou wilt clear it away. Then shall I know that thou art my son, my helper."

Tehuti-mes awoke, and his dream had been so very real that as he looked up in adoration at the mighty stone face above him he half expected to see the big lips open anew to answer the devout prayers by which he promised obedience to the god's command. He laid up the words in his heart, and vowed that when he became king he would do all that his god had commanded. Some years after this



VIEW OF THE SPHINX SHOWING THE TABLET AND TEMPLE BETWEEN THE FORE LEGS.

his father died, and the prince ascended the throne of Egypt and was King Tehuti-mes IV. I will tell you now how it happened that we have found out whether he did what he made terrific gales of wind, and then the sand is whirled along through the air in such quantities that it is worse for people to be out in than a rain-storm or snow-storm. Each gust of wind



PRINCE TEHUTI-MES AWAKES FROM HIS DREAM.

up his mind to do the day when he slept in the shadow of the Sphinx.

You have learned that the desert is mostly sand. Egypt does not have snow and hail and rain, as we do; hence its sand keeps exceedingly dry and powdery. Often there are

carries along just as much sand as it can support, and when anything obstructs the path of the wind, then and there the sand is dropped, and falls again to the ground.

Now, on the day when Prince Tehuti-mes had his dream, these sand-storms had been

blowing around the Sphinx for more than two thousand years, so you can imagine what a pile of sand had accumulated against him. In fact, he was all covered up, except his head.

And he was covered up in the year 1818, eighty-one years ago, when an Englishman named Caviglia undertook the task of digging him out. He had heard many interesting stories about the great Sphinx. In a book written by the celebrated Roman, Pliny, it was stated that a king was buried under it. Caviglia desired to find the tomb of this king, so he engaged a large number of laborers — men to dig and women and children to carry off the sand in baskets on their heads. They dug over a space of more than a hundred feet, carrying away the sand for days, and finally, what do you think they found? Right under the chin of the monstrous idol, at the end of a long passage between its paws, they found a little temple. The back wall of this temple was one huge block of red granite, covered all over with pictures and writing. Perhaps you think the writing was in English or German or French, or even in Greek or Latin. In not one of these. It was in a strange language that nobody could read. In fact, it did not look at all like a language. It looked for all the world just like a lot of pictures.

You must know that, ages before the dawn of history, there was no such thing as an alphabet. Letters had not been invented, and when people wished to send a written message anywhere, they did it by making pictures of what they wished to tell. This is the way the ancient Egyptians commenced to write. By and by, one at a time, they learned to make each picture stand for the sound of a letter or syllable, and so they spelled out their words.



DRAWN BY HARRY FENN, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

THE SPHINX TO-DAY.

You may imagine that it was a very long, tedious process to write in this way. This is the kind of writing which Mr. Caviglia found on the stone in the little house between the paws of the Sphinx. It is called the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. A Frenchman named Champollion first found out how to read it, and he had to study over it a long time before he could do so.

In 1896 an American, Colonel Raun of San Francisco, made

another attempt to uncover the Sphinx and find the buried king. With the help of a hundred Arabs, men and boys, he dug out the rubbish from a hole about forty feet deep, which had been cut down into the solid rock of the lion's body ages ago. The bottom of this hole was blocked up with stones. The Egyptian government would not allow him to remove them, so he was obliged to stop just at the very spot where is probably the entrance to an ancient tomb. He cleaned out the little temple, and found in it a piece of the stone beard, which had broken off and been buried for centuries. And more interesting still it was to find a part of the royal crown. This stone crown was gigantic. It was ten feet across and about fifteen or twenty feet high, and fitted into a hole in the head by a stem seven feet long.

When the writing upon the stone which Mr. Caviglia found was finally deciphered, it was learned from it that King Tehuti-mes IV. had built this little temple in the first year of his reign, more than three thousand years ago! Upon the stone he had had engraved in big hieroglyphics the whole story of his hunting expedition, his dream, and the command of the god. And of course he must have cleared away the sand, else he could not have set up the stone. But the sand soon drifted back again, and ever

since, though it has been several times dug out, the Sphinx is always being covered up by the drifting sands, and perhaps some day it will be overwhelmed and disappear altogether.

This is the story of the great sun-god Hor-em-akhu, which we call the Sphinx; and if, some day, you go to Egypt, you can see it for yourself — that is, if it is not buried by that time.



TWO VALENTINES.

BY TUDOR JENKS.

YOU never saw anything half so fine
As the Princess Clementine's valentine!
It glittered with gold; it shimmered with
lace;
Pink Cupids poised with dainty grace,
Plump of limb and sly of face;
Poems and posies, garlands gay,
Were mixed in a decorative way.
'T was all complete in a silver box
With tiniest of keys and locks,
And left by a page as sly as a fox,
Who had never even a word to say,
But handed it in on a silver tray,
Took to his heels, and ran away.
I 'm sure the page was not to blame
That the princess knew from whom it came—
A very rich prince of a noble name.
The princess yawned while she agreed
'T was a very rich valentine indeed.

Then the gift was stowed away
In a steel strong-box — and it 's there to-day.

On his way home, the page did stray
From the beaten path to a woodland way
Which brought him, just at close of day,
To a neat little cottage where he knew
A sweet little maid, who sweeter grew
Each day she was his sweetheart true.
On tippest tiptoe, soft and still,
The dapper page crept near, until
He left a rose on the window-sill;
Attached to the rose was this billet-doux:

The rose is red, the violet blue,
Sugar is sweet, and so are you;
If you love me as I love you,
No knife can cut our love in two.

'T was trite — but the best that he could do.

When the maiden finds the rose,
Rosy pink her sweet face glows.

The strong-box gift to strong-box went;
The rose from heart to heart was sent.
They say a brook, whate'er its course,
Can rise no higher than its source.

THE COLBURN PRIZE.

BY GABRIELLE E. JACKSON.

CHAPTER I.

THE PERFECTLY SPLENDID NEWS.

"Oh, mama, mama, what *do* you suppose?" cried a very excited little girl, as she rushed into her mother's cozy "den" at half-past one o'clock on a certain Friday afternoon.

"I 'suppose'—I 'suppose'—well, I 'suppose' my little daughter wants her luncheon; and I 'suppose' she wants to kiss me just over my left eye; and I 'suppose' she has something wildly exciting to tell me—probably a piece of school news or something similar; otherwise she would not have rushed in like a tornado; a southeast gale is generally sufficient to announce an ordinary piece of news." And Mrs. Folsome laughed as she drew Gertrude toward her with a tender, caressing gesture.

"No; but really, truly, mama, I have the most exciting piece of news to tell this time, and I just simply scorched home to tell you all about it. I left Alice pedaling away up the hill, but the news was so perfectly splendid that I had to leave her behind, and come home as hard as ever I could come."

"And now that you are here, why not disclose it at once, and not keep me in this horrible suspense?" said her mother, removing Gertrude's hat and coat as she talked.

"Well, I will; and it 's just this: Mrs. Colburn was at the school this morning, and came into our literature class just as we were

reading a sketch of Longfellow's life, and we each had to read some poem of his. Well, Alice Fisher had just read 'The Bridge,' and



"NOT LONG AFTERWARD SHE WAS COASTING DOWN THE HILL, IN COMPANY WITH HER BOON COMPANION." (SEE PAGE 291.)

she read it beautifully; and then it came my turn, and I read 'The Children's Hour.' You

know how I love it, for it is so like our home that I always feel as though it were papa and I the poem told about. So I read it just as I felt it; and when I'd finished Miss Case said, 'Very nicely read, Gertrude,' and Mrs. Colburn asked my name. Was n't I proud, though!" And Gertrude emphasized her delight by a rapturous little skip to and fro.

"That dance is in parenthesis, I *suppose*." And her mother laughed as she used Gertrude's favorite word.

"Oh, well, I can't help it. The news is so lovely, and I am so glad, that I *have* to dance. But now I'll go on.

"So we all read our poems; and some of those girls—well, I'm glad I was n't any of them, for they made just bosh of what they read. I felt so ashamed for them! And was n't I glad you had always been so careful about my reading! For I never should have been able to read so well if you had n't made me just *see* everything I read, and tell all about it in my own words afterward. Then Mrs. Colburn said,—and you know her voice is just like little silver bells when she talks,—'I wonder how many of the children who have been reading Mr. Longfellow's poems to-day have ever formed mental pictures of them, and I wonder what they mean to those who have done so?'

"Some of us answered that we had, and some of us that we had n't; and then she said, 'I wish each of you would try to *see* them, for

you have no idea how much more the poems would mean to you if you did so.'

"Then I told her that you and I always did that way when we read anything, and what lovely times we had doing it; and you can't think how pleased she was."

"Indeed I can, too, for I know just how



"GERTRUDE'S MOTHER REMOVED HER HAT AND COAT AS SHE TALKED."

fascinating Mrs. Colburn is; she is a poem herself, with her great brown eyes, clear skin, and snowy hair brushed up from her forehead."

"And does n't she dress prettily, mama?—all in those soft grays."

"Yes; she has exquisite taste in that, as in everything else. But now, my darling, come down to luncheon, and tell me the rest at the lunch-table."

With arms locked around each other, mother

and bonny little daughter walked down the pretty oak staircase and into the cheerful dining-room, where Henry, the neat colored boy, had just laid a dainty luncheon.

"Now I am all ready to hear the conclusion," said Mrs. Folsome, when she had poured the tea.

And Gertrude resumed: "Then Mrs. Colburn told us that she felt a great interest in our literature class, and particularly in to-day's subject, as she had known Mr. Longfellow intimately, and had at one time lived near his lovely home in Cambridge. Of course, we girls went nearly wild then, for it made it seem *truly* true. Somehow, mama, it never seems to me that the people who wrote the poems ever *really* lived; does it seem so to you?"

"Why, certainly, dear. I have known, and now know, several persons who have given the world some very lovely thoughts."

"Well, Mrs. Colburn made it seem real to us to-day; for she told us about Mr. Longfellow's house, and his daughters, and—oh! ever so many things that I could n't begin to tell over again! And then she said—and this is the perfectly splendid part—that she wanted us each to choose one of his poems and write a story about it—to draw a pen-picture, one might say, and try to make other people see the poem as we saw it. That is, illustrate it as an artist would, but without drawing a sketch as he would do.

"We are to have them all ready a week from to-day, and are to give them to Miss Case, and she will send them to Mrs. Colburn to be criticized and judged. Then, the Friday after that, we are to meet Mrs. Colburn at the school at twelve o'clock, and the girl who has written the best description is to have a perfectly beautiful prize; and you'll never, never guess what it is to be!"

"I am sure I never shall, so you had better relieve my suspense at once."

"A gold watch with the winner's monogram on one side and 'H. W. L.' on the other!" And Gertrude laid down her knife and fork to point both forefingers at her mother, as though to impress the great importance of this wonderful piece of news more emphatically.

"Did you ever hear of anything so delightful, mother?"

"I don't think I ever did; and I wish with all my heart that you may be the successful competitor: for, aside from the beauty of the prize, its associations will be of far greater value. But you will have to try very hard, dear."

"You may be sure that I shall try hard; and I'm going to begin this very evening. I think I'll choose 'The Children's Hour,' for that seems to mean more to me than any of his poems."

"Then I certainly should choose it, by all means. But tell me, are the descriptions to be read in the school two weeks from to-day?"

"Yes; Miss Case will dismiss the whole school at noon, and then the literature class will meet in the big assembly-room. Of course, any of the other girls who choose to remain to hear the readings may do so, and we may invite some of our friends if we wish to."

"May I be considered a friend, and come, too?" asked Mrs. Folsome, as she rose from the table.

"My vote is a *Yes*, with a capital letter! Why, it would n't be worth a little green button unless you were there to listen!"

"Very well; I'll be sure to be there, and so add to the value of the occasion that it will be worth a big blue button! Will that be par value?"

"Yes, indeedy. And now I'm going out for a spin; for I've thought so hard about all this that my brain is as snarly as my hair, and if you have to get the kinks out of that and my hair, too, before I go to bed to-night, you will have an awful time. Good-by!"

Not long afterward she was coasting down the hill, in company with her boon companion, Alice Fisher, whom she had met at the front door; for, as Mr. Folsome put it, "they hunted in couples," and were never far apart.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMPETITION BEGINS.

BEFORE going further it will perhaps be well to tell something of our little heroine; for we all like to know somewhat of the personal

appearance and surroundings of those in whom we are interested.

Mr. and Mrs. Folsome lived in a pretty suburban town not many miles distant from the great city that had recently absorbed so many of the smaller cities which surrounded it. The town in which they had chosen to make their own particular home was one of the loveliest of the city's suburbs, and not within its boundary lines could have been found a spot more attractive.

While not wealthy, Mr. Folsome enjoyed a very comfortable income, and so long as he was able to bring happiness to his wife and little daughter, to provide them with everything necessary to their comfort and many little pleasures besides, he was as happy as a man could well be.

Mrs. Folsome was a devoted wife and mother, living in the lives of her husband and sunshiny little daughter, and finding her own life very full and sweet therein.

She and Gertrude were boon companions, and to Gertrude nothing was quite complete unless "mama" shared it. While both parents always considered their little daughter's happiness, and endeavored to gratify every reasonable wish, they never, for one moment, lost sight of the fact that she was an "only child," and had a very wholesome dread of her ever becoming the proverbial spoiled one. To guide her gently up to an unselfish, noble womanhood was their paramount aim; and up to the time our story opens they had certainly met with pronounced success, for Gertrude was as happy and wholesome a bit of bonny girlhood as one would wish for.

She had just passed her twelfth birthday, and, thanks to her wise mother's care, was as strong and healthy as plenty of outdoor exercise, wholesome food, and early hours could make her. An active mind had been carefully trained, and at twelve she was as well informed as is the average girl of sixteen; for both father and mother read and talked freely with her, taking care to answer in the wisest, simplest way any question she asked.

And they were kept well occupied, I do assure you, for under their wise care brain and body developed with surprising rapidity.

She was about the average height, gracefully formed, her head well poised, and her body erect and alert. She had big brown eyes, a dainty nose somewhat inclined to sniff at the clouds, a beautiful, sensitive mouth, and a clear olive skin, which, defying wind and weather, kept its perfect clearness and softness under all conditions. Her hair never *would* "stay put," but was determined to fly about in all directions, and kink up in spite of the stiffest of stiff brushes.

Such was the little maid whom, a few hours later, we find scribbling away at her pretty oak desk in the cozy library, her forehead in a kink, and her mouth pursed up into a perplexed pucker.

"Papa dear," she said, turning to her father, who sat reading the evening paper beside the shaded lamp which stood upon the library table, "would you prefer to have your study—if you happened to have one—furnished in dark red or in old blue?"

"That would depend upon the woodwork of the room," was the reply.

"I think I shall make the room all in beautiful mahogany, with a richly carved chimney-piece and handsome mahogany furnishings."

"Then I think the old blue would be the handsomer; and I would have the tiling of the fireplace to match."

"Oh, yes! and beautiful brass fire-irons and fender, and a lovely brass lamp with a pretty cream-colored shade; and everything just as it *should* be."

"Yes; I should certainly have everything just as it *should* be." And her father smiled at her eagerness.

"Are we to have your description read to us when completed?" asked her mother, who sat before the pretty open fireplace with "Dot," the fox-terrier, curled up in her lap.

"To be sure you are! Why, what would it be like if you and papa did n't have first criticism, I'd like to know?" Gertrude looked quite horrified.

Scratch, scratch, went the pencil, and for a long time it was the only sound heard.

"There! that's the first draft, and if it's all right I've only to copy it carefully." Then Gertrude bounced up so suddenly that her

pens and pencils danced, and Dot fell heels over head into the fender.

"Mercy me! I do believe he has bumped himself to bits," cried the unintentional cause

One saw the rich hangings of the handsomely appointed study; the soft light from the hall lamp falling aslant the doorway between the heavy velvet portières; the bright



"A GOLD WATCH WITH THE WINNER'S MONOGRAM ON ONE SIDE."

of the little dog's upset, and she flew to rescue the unfortunate.

"Did I nearly scare you into fits, you poor little stump-tail? Well, it was too bad, and I won't give such a bounce again. But, Dot,"—seriously,—“you don't know what cause I have for jumping”—holding the little terrier at arm's-length, and wagging her head at him very solemnly.

"Just suppose *you* were trying your very very bestest best to win a perfectly beautiful gold—Oh, dear, you would n't give a pin for a watch, would you? Well, then, a bone—a monstrous bone. Don't you think you would get excited, too?"

Dot wriggled and squirmed, wagged his stump of a tail, and made frantic laps at her face with his little pink tongue.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen and dogs, your attention, please." And she began to read her pen-picture of "The Children's Hour."

It was really remarkably well done for a child of twelve, and showed an exceptional appreciation of the beautiful poem.

hall with its great wide stairway, and the three laughing girls tiptoeing down the stairs. Then came the "sudden raid," and the girls surround their father as he sits in the large easy-chair before the glowing coals of the open fire, their arms encircling him, while they press their soft, laughing faces close to his graver one, and he tries to gather them all to his heart, which is large enough to hold them within its "round tower," even though his arms cannot embrace all at once.

Love, tenderness, mirth, and joy were all depicted, and well depicted, too; for, with all her fun and happy-go-lucky ways, Gertrude had a keen appreciation of all that was beautiful, and her constant association with her parents made her quick to realize the feelings of others. Then, too, she expressed herself easily and simply in writing, and each word told.

"Very well written, my little girl," said her father, when she had finished reading. "You have only to go over it carefully in order to make a few corrections in the construction of

your sentences, and you will be in a fair way to hear your watch ticking, two weeks from to-night."

"Do you *truly* think so, papa?"—eagerly.

"I truly do, dear."

"And, mama, what do you think of it?"

"I 've just come back from a pleasant call upon Mr. Longfellow and his daughters in their Cambridge home, and have hardly yet waked up to my present surroundings."

"Really—have you really? Oh, I *am* so glad I made you see it just as I felt it all! And now come along, Dot, and let 's have a romp. I 've scribbled till my fingers ache."

And away she pranced with her jolly play-fellow, her mood having changed in one little instant from the serious to the merry side of her nature.

CHAPTER III.

ALICE FISHER.

MONDAY morning found the school-room in a state of wild excitement; for the girls were

all brimful of the competition, and many of them, like Gertrude, had already written their papers. So a perfect babel of tongues held forth upon their various strong points; for large and small were alike interested, and ready to praise or criticize freely. Of those already written several were very good, and the contest for the watch bid fair to be a keen competition.

"It 's no use for me to try, for I never can make any sense of it," said Dora Hinton, a rather heavy girl, whose seat was two or three desks removed from Gertrude's.

"Oh, yes, you can, too," replied Alice Fisher, to whom the remark was made, and who wished to encourage Dora.

"No, I can't, really. Somehow, I can't imagine things one bit. I like to hear of them, or read about them, but I think imagination must have been left out when I was made." Poor Dora looked rather forlorn over her shortcomings.

"I *do* so wish I could win that watch," said Alice, wistfully; "but I 'm afraid I sha'n't



"‘WOULD YOU PREFER TO HAVE YOUR STUDY FURNISHED IN DARK RED OR IN OLD BLUE?’ ASKED GERTRUDE."

have much chance of doing it, for Gertrude Folsome writes such perfectly splendid compositions that I know she will be able to write this thing better than any other girl in the school."

"But you write lovely ones, too, for Miss Case said only the other day that she could hardly decide which was the better one of the two lying upon her desk, and one was yours and the other Gertrude's. It was the day you had to stay home, the day when your mother was sick."

"Did she truly? I *am* so glad, for I did n't think she liked mine very well, and Gertrude's got the highest mark."

"Yes, I know it; but that was because Miss Case liked her subject better."

"Then I have a chance, after all; and won't I try hard! I did n't have time to do anything on Friday or Saturday, for mama was n't well, and I had a lot of things to do for her; but I guess I 'll have time to begin this afternoon." And Alice went back to her desk, which she shared with Gertrude.

The two were fast friends, and were together as much as circumstances permitted; but Gertrude's life and Alice's were very unlike, for the former's was all sunshine, while over the latter's came many little shadows.

Mrs. Fisher was a nervous, fretful woman who fancied herself an invalid, and proved rather an exacting one; so that it was Alice who usually had to think for the mother, rather than the mother who watched over her child.

Alice was the youngest of three children, the others being young men at college, and was rather a delicate child, tall for her age, which was fourteen, and extremely sensitive and nervous. Thinking so much for her mother, and striving to shield her from all care and excitement, had made her prematurely thoughtful and quiet. She was a good student, and worked most conscientiously, but quite alone; for her mother would not hear of her bringing the lessons near her room, and her father was too much occupied with the rise and fall of stocks to give her a thought. So she worked on by herself; and Miss Case, who knew the peculiarities of her home surround-

ings, marveled at her progress, and gave her all the assistance she could give, in justice to the others.

Alice was greatly attached to Miss Case; and this was natural, for a lovelier character never was brought in contact with young people. Isabel Case had certainly not missed her vocation when she became principal of a large and successful girls' school. It could not fail to prosper under her wise management, for she understood children perfectly; and although she could be affectionate and merry with them, she could also guide and govern them absolutely, and without their ever suspecting how absolutely.

Alice had few pleasures and few pretty things, for her mother left everything to the maids and to the seamstress who came each spring and fall to do the family sewing, and Alice was "fitted out" according to Miss Moore's ideas.

If Miss Case had a partial thought in the matter, it was for Alice, because she realized that the winning of the prize would mean more to her than to the others, who were nearly all the children of happy homes and well-to-do parents, who could and did give them a great deal.

Miss Case, however, was quick to realize that Alice had a sharp rival in Gertrude, and was wise enough to say nothing to any one upon the subject of the contest.

As the two girls rode home on their wheels—and even her wheel had been given to Alice simply from motives of economy, for her home was at least two miles from the school, and Mr. Fisher considered the wheel cheaper than hiring a carriage often—they talked over the question of the hour.

"I 'm going to work on my paper just as hard as ever I can this afternoon. I do wish I had some one to talk to about it, it 's so stupid to do it all alone. Did you do yours all alone? I don't mean that some one helped you write it, of course; but after you 'd written it did you read it to your mother?" Alice asked Gertrude.

"Yes, and to papa, too; and they both liked it ever so much. Oh, Alice, can't you come over to our house this afternoon, and

stay all night with me? We would have a gay time, and you could write your paper and read it to us. Do!"

"Do you think your mother would like to have me?"

"To be sure she would. She always says to ask you whenever I like. Will you come?"

"I'd love to," was the brief answer.

"Mama, may I go over and stay all night with Gertrude?" Alice asked her mother,

some at once, and a cup of tea, too. But tell her not to make it so strong that I can't touch it." Then Mrs. Fisher resumed her perusal of the light novel which Alice's entrance had interrupted.

Her simple preparations made, Alice started for the visit from which she expected so much pleasure. Her wheel spun gaily along in the bright October sunshine, and brilliantly tinted leaves fell upon her from the beautiful maples which almost met over the road.

Soon she was installed in Gertrude's cozy room; and while the latter prepared her lessons for the following day, Alice worked hard upon the all-important paper.

She had chosen for her subject "The Bridge," the same poem she had read on the previous Friday. Its vein of sadness appealed to her subdued nature, as the brighter poem had struck a responsive chord in Gertrude's happier one; and she seemed to see the quiet waters flowing beneath her feet.

In about an hour she announced that her work was finished; and Gertrude in the meantime having completed her tasks, the two girls ran out for their wheels; for the young bodies needed exercise after the young brains had worked so steadily.

"I'm afraid it is no use for me to compete with you, but I can't help wishing to win the watch. I've always wanted one so badly; but when I ask papa, he always says, 'Yes, yes, child,

certainly,' and then forgets all about it, I believe. So many of the girls have such pretty things, and I do love them so."

"I don't blame you one bit for wanting to win it; I guess anybody would love to win that prize."

But a serious tone had come into Gertrude's voice, and a thoughtful look upon her face.



"ALICE WORKED HARD UPON THE ALL-IMPORTANT PAPER."

when she reached home about twenty minutes later.

"I don't care, I'm sure. Did you bring home the new biscuits your father saw advertised yesterday?"

"Yes, 'm; they are on the side-table in the dining-room."

"Well, run along; and tell Jane to fetch me

(To be continued.)



Ballad of the Little Page

BY ABBIE FARWELL BROWN.

It was a little, little page,
Was brought from far away,
To bear the great queen's velvet train
Upon her bridal day.

His yellow curls were long and bright,
His page's suit was blue,
With golden clasps at neck and knee,
And ruffles fair and new.

And faith, he was the smallest page
The court had ever known:
His head scarce reached the topmost step
That led up to the throne.

And oh, 't was but a little lad
Had never been before
So many leagues from kin and friends,
And from his father's door!

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And oh!—'t was but a little child
Who never yet, I wis,
Had stolen lonely to his bed
Without his mother's kiss.

He had not seen the noble queen,
Of whom his heart had fear;
He knew no friend at court to give
A welcome and good cheer.

It was the busy night before
The great queen's wedding-day,
And all was bustle, haste, and noise,
And every one was gay;

And each one had his task to do,
And none had time to spare
To tend a weeping little page
Whose mother was not there.

Far in a big and gloomy room
 Within the castle keep,
 The little page lay all alone,
 And wept, and could not sleep.

The little page lay all alone,
 And hid his head and cried,
 Until it seemed his aching heart
 Would burst his little side.

The chamber door was set ajar,
 And one was passing by

Who heard the little page's sobs
 And then his piteous cry.

Then some one lifted up the latch
 And pushed the heavy door,
 And then a lady entered in
 And crossed the chamber floor—

A lady tall and sweet and fair,
 In bridal white who stepped;
 She stood beside the page's bed,
 And asked him why he wept.



"—AND NONE HAD TIME TO SPARE
 TO TEND A LITTLE WEeping PAGE."



"HE TREMBLED AND LOOKED DOWN."

And then he sobbed about a "kiss,"
His "mother," and his "home,"
And wished the queen had called no page,
And wished he had not come;

For she was "such a proud, great queen"
He was afraid, he said;
And he was "lost and lonely" there
In that huge, gloomy bed.

And then the lady bent her down
And kissed him on the lips,
And smoothed his yellow, silken curls
With tender finger-tips.

The tears stood in her gentle eyes;
"Poor little lad!" she said,

And cuddled him up in her arms
And knelt down by the bed.

And so she held him, close and warm,
And sang him off to sleep,
While at her nod her waiting-maids
A silent watch did keep.

And when the morning smiled again
The little page awoke.
They clad him in a suit of white,
With velvet cap and cloak,

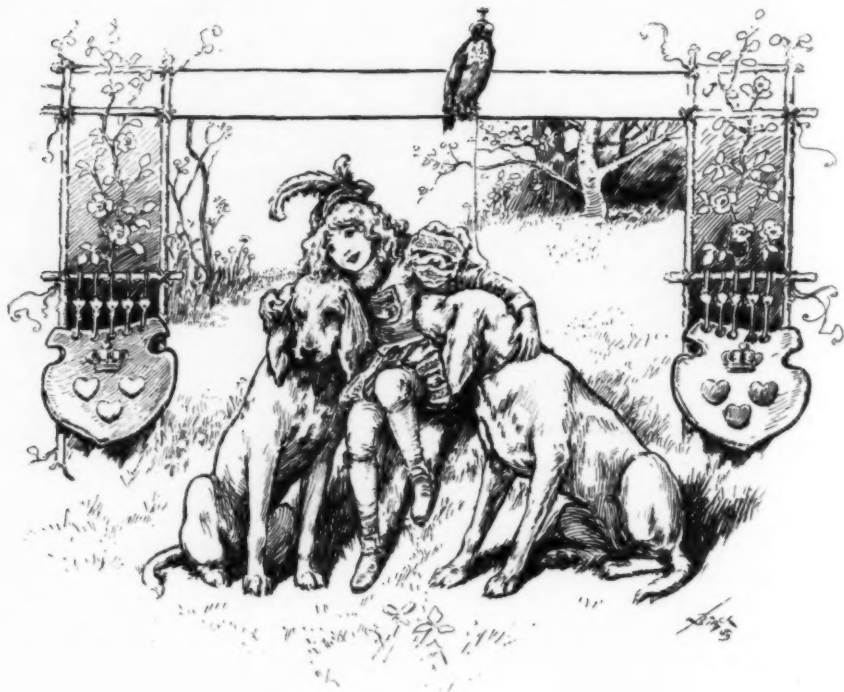
And crystal buckles on his shoes,
And led him to the queen,
All lovely in her bridal gear,
The fairest ever seen.

And he was such a tiny page,
He trembled and looked down,
For he was sore afraid to see
The great queen sternly frown.

But lo! he heard a soft voice say,
"O little page, look here!
Am I, who sing to sleep so well,
A queen for child to fear?"

He raised his eyes, and lo! the bride
Looked on the page and smiled,
And then he knew the queen had played
At nurse-maid for a child.

And well he graced the wedding-feast
And bore her velvet train,
And at his dear queen's side thenceforth
Was never sad again.



THE BABY CROCUS.

BY GEORGE BANCROFT GRIFFITH.

THERE in its own little fragrant dome
You may find the baby crocus at home.
Away from all scenes of blight and strife,
It lives a delicate convent-life.
From worldly care and dangers free,
It grows bright golden for you and me;

In its vaulted cloister in early spring
Hears the birds of the wood choir sweetly
sing;
And all the while God perfects its form,
For it sleeps safe shielded from wind and
storm!

UNDER THE HEADLIGHT.

(An all-night ride on the pilot of a locomotive.)

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.

ONE summer morning, nearly twenty years ago, I found myself in New Orleans, Louisiana, with very little money indeed. Being rich in youth and health, this fact did not trouble me. I was rather expert in certain branches of photography, and at once set about obtaining employment at what I was pleased to call my profession.

But it was a poor year and a dull season. I tramped day after day from gallery to gallery, getting always the same reply: "More help than we need now. No chance before cotton time," which was then about three months distant. Finally I went to the photographic supply depot and learned there that a customer at Winona, Mississippi, wanted at once an operator and retoucher, and would pay for his work a fair price, as wages went. I thanked my informant, and said that I would start immediately.

But alas! Winona was more than two hundred and seventy miles from New Orleans, and the fare something over eight dollars. A year or so later I should have stated my case frankly to the supply-dealer and arranged for my ticket. But I did not know of this custom then, and also, being very young, was too proud, or too timid, perhaps, to confess my predicament. Instead, I went back to my cheap room to devise ways and means.

There seemed very few of either. I had precisely twenty-five cents after paying my bill, and the sale of a half-worn heavy coat—not needed in this climate and season—brought me fifty cents more. The remainder of my wardrobe I put into a small valise, and presently set out on foot for the Illinois Central Railroad yards, where freight-trains for the North were made up. I had resolved to beat my way.

I was not altogether unfitted for the under-

taking. In still earlier youth I had for one summer been station-agent's assistant, or "cub," at a small Western village, and had learned a good deal about cars, as well as to climb over them while in motion; also the lingo and manner of railroad men, and the kind of talk most likely to obtain a free ride. In fact, during the summer that followed, I had made an extensive trip, in company with a boy-friend, through the great wheat districts of the Central West, earning a good deal of money in the harvest-fields, and paying no railroad fare whatever, though often riding with the trainmen, and in such style as the caboose afforded. I felt confident, therefore, of my ability to get about handily on any part of a running train, and relied as well on a certain railroad freemasonry, though I am bound to say the latter did not count for much in this adventure.

It was a warm day. Even the small valise and my light attire became a burden. Arriving at the yards, the sun beat fiercely down on the cinders and shining steel rails. Then, the constant switching was confusing, and there seemed to be no train making up that would be ready to start for some hours at least.

I resolved at length to walk to the first small station outside the city, and wait somewhere in the shade until a train came along. Remembering past experience, I counted on making an average of a hundred miles a day, at which rate it would take me about three days to reach Winona.

Beyond the outskirts of the city the road led through a semi-tropical Louisiana swamp, from which the sun drew steam and heavy odors. Here and there I passed gangs of negro railroad laborers, whose shiny blue-black bodies, bare above the waist, and gleaming like polished gun-metal, had a wild look of South African savagery. They chopped and dug at the rank

tropical vegetation, and did n't seem to mind the heat, which to me was stifling.

My valise began to drag on me fearfully, and it would bother me still worse later; I resolved to express it, charges collect, from the little station at which, almost overcome by the heat, I at length arrived. Here also I bought a few cents' worth of crackers, and, with cold water from a public well was soon refreshed. Then I went over near the track, and sat down in a shady place to wait.

I had barely rested when a construction train ran in, pausing just long enough for telegraphic orders. When it pulled out, I mounted an empty flat-car at the rear end. By and by an employee came back to where I was sitting.

"Where you goin'?" he shouted, above the clatter of the wheels.

"Winona!" I shouted back.

"Can't ride here! Against the rules!"

"Sorry, but I *must* go."

"Can't allow it. You must get off next stop."

"All right."

The train was for hauling gravel and was very long. I sat on the edge of the flat-car and let my feet swing over the side. The cool wind fanned by, and I enjoyed the scenery. We were making time, too, for a gravel-train, and I thought if I could just keep this up I could increase the daily average. After about a dozen miles, however, we stopped, and I jumped off, as I had agreed to do.

We were at another little village, and I walked for a short distance up a shady street. Then my train whistled to start, and as she got under good headway I resumed my old place on the rear flat-car. Presently my former acquaintance returned and shouted:

"Thought I told you you could n't ride here!"

"Yes, I believe you did."

"Why did n't you get off back there, then?"

"I did."

He smiled then, too.

"Well," he said, "you can go as far as the lake. We stop there to work. But it's a bad place to lay up in. Mosquitos will kill you."

"When does the next train come along?"

"About nine o'clock. Passenger-train. Stops at the tank there for water."

That suited me exactly. I could make a station, perhaps two, on the passenger, and some time during the night catch a freight, which, with good luck, I could "hold down" till morning, thus completing my first hundred miles or more.

By and by we came to Lake Pontchartrain bridge, and just beyond it my train ran into a switch and laid up. A gang of painters were employed on the bridge, and with these I soon struck up an acquaintance; for, among the many occupations of a restless youth, I had also painted. The foreman offered me a job, presently, at two dollars a day and board. I thought at first I would take it temporarily, but finally declined, fearing the delay would cause me to lose the other position.

The lake was picturesque. The tall moss-hung cypresses and the placid waters were just as I had seen them in the pictures. The bridge had a draw in the middle of it, and presently this was opened to let a lumber-schooner pass—the "Mary Polly" of New Orleans. As she passed through I looked down on her peaceful decks and wished she were going my way.

At the end of the bridge there was a little store where I ate a light lunch. I did find the mosquitos rather fierce, but I had nothing to do except to defend myself, and night brought, at last, the rumble of my approaching train. I knew it only stopped here for water, and I could tell just about where the pilot, or cow-catcher, of the engine would be when it stopped. In a line with this and near the track I stood waiting behind some tall weeds and bushes, while the headlight streamed across the bridge, passed me, and the heavy train slowed down and stood panting at the tank. When the big water-pipe was hoisted back to its place and the locomotive began to move slowly, I stepped out and, putting my toe on the lower crosspiece of the cow-catcher, swung myself lightly into place, directly in front of the boiler and beneath the great glaring headlight.

It had grown quite dark by this time, and neither the engineer nor fireman was looking. I felt quite sure I had not been noticed.

Presently we began to go much faster, then still faster. Then we settled down into a steady thirty to thirty-five mile swing, and the rushing

wind swept heat, mosquitos, and weariness far behind.

Faster and still faster! The engine began to rock and hum, and a cloud of small sharp cinders swirled down from above. They stung my face, but I did not mind them. I was cutting off good miles now. How long I would be allowed to do so, I had no idea; but every two minutes that it lasted meant a mile, at least, nearer my journey's end, and the sensation and excitement of it were glorious. The light from the great eye above me streamed far ahead up the track. On each side was a black wall of night, and between them I was plunging northward at a fearful speed.

On, and still on. Suddenly, with a wild scream from above, we swept through a town without stopping. Country stores were built along the track, after the usual fashion of Southern villages. I saw lights and people. Then woods and blackness again, with the great light streaming ahead.

A new joy now swept over me. My train was the express—the fast mail. It would stop only where railroads crossed, or at large towns, and for water. There are very few railroads or large towns in Mississippi,—fewer than now,—and an express-locomotive does not take water often. I was good for thirty miles, perhaps, before the first stop. How much better it was than the plodding freights! I looked down the shining steel rails that drew together and vanished in the gloom far ahead, and was exultant, with the careless happiness of youth.

Another village fled by, and another. I was quite settled down to a sense of enjoyment and ownership by this time, and when at last we whistled "down brakes," and I felt our speed slacken for the first stop, it was with a sense of personal injury and ill usage. Perhaps this was to be the end of my glorious ride. It would be more difficult to escape notice in the town than it had been at the lonely water-tank. To add to my dismay, some boys saw me as we swept up to the platform, and ran along by the engine, pointing and calling to the engineer. It was all up, of course. I must get off, and stay off. They had fallen a little behind, however, by the time the engine stopped. I

slid off directly in front of the pilot, and walked carelessly away as if I had reached my journey's end. Opposite the platform some ties were piled near the track, and there it was dark. I stepped between them and waited. The boys came up to the pilot, whooping eagerly, and found me gone. I heard them talking loudly and laughing; then their voices grew fainter. The bell clanged to go, and from my place in the shadow I saw the engine move. I stepped out quickly, though with no undue haste, and resumed my place on the pilot. I was, I believe, quite cool. I realized that a scramble might mean a misstep, and a misstep, death. The engineer or fireman may have seen me, but, if so, they gave no sign. The town became scattering houses, with only here and there a light; then came woods again, and the rushing black walls.

I rejoiced greatly that I was good for at least one more stage of my journey. I believed that I had already covered no less than thirty miles on the pilot, and that the next stop would mean as many more. Every village that we dashed through added to my satisfaction; and when the engine screamed, I shouted with it. Then I sang hymns and jubilee songs to the roar and rhythm and rock of the locomotive.

No boys troubled me at the next stop. Perhaps it was too late for them. Nevertheless, I got off instantly, on the side opposite the platform, and walked back to the mail-car. I knew that it had a step on the front, and that the door leading out to this step was rarely opened. It was dark there, and I sat on the end of a tie just below until the train moved; then I climbed aboard, and away we went once more.

This was a harder place to ride, for the cinders and smoke were terrible; but I was determined to make at least one more run, and I felt that the engineer and fireman, who must have seen me, would be on the watch and prevent my boarding the pilot again.

Either the run was unusually long this time, or it seemed so because of the discomforts of my position. Then, too, for some reason, a postal employee came out there and found me. He shouted to me to get off, and stay off, at the next stop. I did not waste words with him. It was no place for argument. I had resolved

to "get off and stay off" his old car, anyway. I did so, and went quietly forward to the friendly engine.

My engineer and fireman were off their guard now, it seemed, and I lay in the shadow of some freight-cars on the siding until the pilot moved. Then I mounted as before, and with renewed joy and confidence. This was something like. On the mail-car was no proper place for a gentleman to ride. Perhaps the wildness and excitement of it all had made me desperate by this time, for I was seized with a determination to ride till daybreak.

"I won't get off till morning!
I won't get off till morning!
I won't get off till morning,
Till daylight doth appear!"

I shouted.

But there are some things easier to sing than to do. I went along without difficulty and with increasing confidence for several stations. Then, all at once,—at Canton, I think,—we changed engines. There was broad light everywhere, and a number of employees were about the cab. The conductor, too, came up presently to chat with the engineer, and from my concealment in the shadow of a small tool-house I could hear what they said. I heard the conductor speak of the hot night and a black cloud, and say that it was going to rain. I wished that it would pour instantly, so that everybody would go away.

This it did not do, and the engineer oiled and wiped while the conductor and yard employees lingered and talked. There would be no chance whatever to get back on the pilot,—none, so far as I could see, to get anywhere,—unless these fellows went away. The employees did so presently, but the conductor lingered and talked on. Then, for some unknown reason, he turned and walked directly to where I was sitting. It would have been foolish to run. I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep. He came up and held his lantern to my face. Then he called to the engineer: "Here 's a fellow going to get wet, Bill!"

The engineer laughed, but did not seem interested enough to look. The conductor left me, and I heard him talking to the engineer

again—something about tramps and getting killed. He talked on, and I concluded that he meant to stay there until the train started and get on the first coach as it passed. The situation was becoming desperate. After all, perhaps it would be as well to stop over one train at Canton.

But when the bell began to ring it brought me to my feet. The conductor had walked back a few yards to the end of the platform. If he got on the step of the mail-car there was no hope. The train was moving now, and gaining speed with every foot. He was a heavy man, and would hardly take chances on waiting for the coach. The baggage-car passed him, and the mail-car came on at good speed. He looked at the step as it came abreast of him, made a slight movement with his body, and — let it pass.

I hesitated no longer. He would not look around again. I stepped quickly over to the track, and as the mail-car step swept by, almost on a level with my head, I caught the handles and made a quick, swinging leap. An instant later I was seated on the upper step, my heart thumping and my breath coming quick and hard. The step had been very high and was going very fast. It was the greatest feat of my life.

The postal employee did not come out this time, perhaps because it was sprinkling and very discouraging out there. At the next stop I went back to my old post on the pilot.

Now it began to rain in earnest—great splashing drops at first, with quick lightning and thunder. I was drenched through at once, of course. Then followed one of the fiercest thunder-storms of that semi-tropical country: a continuous blue flare, crashing thunder, a torrent of water that bore upon me as if from a broken dam. The conductor's prophecy had come true: I *was* wet. It was cool, though, and a relief after the mail-step. I bent my head to it, and laughed aloud at the wildness of the situation. I thought, if we should only strike a cow now, there would be nothing left to happen, and the fact that we were rushing on to the North through it all exhilarated me till I shouted and sang and laughed with the rain beating and blinding me. The storm slack-

ened at last, then ceased. The air was much cooler, and I began to feel chilly with the rushing wind in my wet clothes. But the

interest and exercise of regaining my position, that kept me awake.

And so on through the night. I do not



"THIRTY MILES AN HOUR! HOW MUCH BETTER THIS WAS THAN THE FLOODING FREIGHTS!"

boiler behind me was warm, and I pressed back against it. As my clothes dried I grew very sleepy.

For a time I could scarcely hold my eyes open, and it was only the occasional stop, and the

know how many stops we made in all—how many times I concealed myself behind the ties, weeds, cars, sheds, or whatever came handiest; but it could not have been less than a dozen in all. Of these places I caught a few

of the names as we passed the station placards. I remember dimly Crystal Spring, Jackson, the State capital, and, more clearly, Canton (I think), where we changed engines. I had counted on the night seeming very long, and I

rain had something to do with his mirth. He was good-hearted, though, and went back to his cab with a pleasant word. If he sees this, and remembers, I want him to know that if I was n't clean, I was grateful for his kindness.



ON THROUGH THE NIGHT AND THE STORM!

could scarcely believe that it was more than two o'clock when all at once I realized that daylight was coming. The sky was clear now, and the stars were fading back into the white light of morning. Bushes and trees on either side began to show in dim outline as we whirled past. At the next stop the fireman came around and met me as I left my seat. He carried a lantern and an oil-can, and did not seem surprised.

"Don't you ever get tired?" he asked.

I knew then that he must have been aware of me for some time. I said that I *was* rather tired—that travel was not all pleasure. He laughed, and throwing his light in my face, looked at me intently. Then he laughed again. I suppose the soot and cinders that had gathered on my features and mixed with the

The next stop was a water-tank in the woods. The sun was on the horizon, and the wet green trees were loud with birds. The conductor came forward and saw me.

"This is your place to get off," he said.

"Well," I replied, "I guess I *will* stop over here."

I sat down on a green bank, and the train went on. Then I went to a barrel of fresh rain-water that stood near the tank, and plunged in my arms and head. When I had finished I believed I had the soot and cinders pretty well off. I learned my mistake when, later, I came face to face with a mirror. But, at least, I was refreshed, and sat down to think and congratulate myself on the night's run. I believed that it was about four o'clock, and that I had been seven hours on the train. I could not have

made less than two hundred miles, which, with the distance beyond Lake Pontchartrain, would make a total not far from two hundred and twenty-five, leaving perhaps fifty still to go. I could take a good rest, and, with any luck at all, still complete my journey a day sooner than I had calculated.

I realized suddenly that I was thinking all this aloud, and repeating some of it over and over. My head felt light, and I knew that I was slightly delirious from loss of sleep and excitement. I was tempted to lie down at once, but decided to walk on to the first village and get something to eat. There were open fields just ahead, where meadow-larks sang and the grass sparkled with dew. The morning air was fresh and sweet — much better, I thought, than the heavy Louisiana atmosphere. I felt perfectly well in body, but found it hard not to think aloud. The mind is very easily unsettled.

All at once I came to a little road that led across the track and connected two fields. A small negro boy was driving a cow across, and just beyond him was a white post with black figures on it. I looked closer and saw that they formed the number "271." I stared at them steadily — 272 would be my destination. I was not quite sure of my brain. Then I asked of the little darky:

"How far is it to the next town?"

He looked at me, grinning, before he spoke.

"'Bout a mile," he said. "You can see it f'm right up yon'er a li'l' piece.

"What 's the name of it?"

"Winona."

I made him repeat it to be sure.

"Yes, sah; Winona. Mighty nice town, sah."

I gave him five of the sixty cents still left in my pocket. Then I hurried on, and going to a cheap railroad restaurant, ate whatever I could get the most of for the least money. They had a wash-room there, and a mirror. In the latter I saw what I most needed, and took it, for towel and basin were there and soap that was strong and plentiful. After breakfast I went to a barber shop, and came out penniless but respectable. I reached my employer's gallery just as he was opening his morning's mail. It contained a letter from New Orleans, stating that a man such as he needed would start at once. It referred to me, and had come on the same train. He was glad to see me, and I remained with him a year. We became the best of friends in time, and one day I told him about my trip.

"Well," he laughed, "you were here on time, anyway."

And so I was. But I would not willingly go through such a night again, and many a poor fellow since then has lost his life in just that sort of an undertaking.

A FIGURATIVE TALE.

BY GRACE FRASER.

ONCE an Elfin, i-drous cute,
Came un-2 my cottage door;
There he played wi-3-d and lute,
As no elf had played be-4.
"If-5 pleased thee, lady fair,
Speak," said he.
"Thy mu-6 grand!
Ni-7-ts like this are rare—"
Thus, as with 8-ender hand
On the youth be-9, I spoke,
I (oh, o-y fate!)-awoke!

THE PURSE OF THE STRANGER.

BY CHARLES LOVE BENJAMIN.

THREE months had the purse of the stranger hung in the tent of Jameel; three months had Jameel and his wife's brother, Ebn-Malek, debated its division without reaching an agreement; and three months had the sheep-herders of Oman fruitlessly discussed the question among themselves until "the purse of the stranger" had become a by-word with the tribe, signifying a problem passing the wit of man to decide.

There were but sixteen paltry bits of silver in the purse in all. Of these Jameel claimed seven, whereas his brother-in-law, Ebn-Malek, maintained that he (Jameel) was justly entitled to but six.

"Not that I begrudge thee the extra coin," said Ebn, "for thou art welcome to the whole purse, if thou wilt take it; but right is right!"

To which Jameel responded that right *was* right; wherefore he insisted upon the seventh coin, though, for his part, he said, had the purse contained a thousand coins, and of gold instead of silver, he would rather that Ebn should take all than that such dross should breed bitter feeling between brethren.

So it happened that as neither could agree with the other, and as none of the tribe could decide the question for them, Jameel hung the purse up in his tent, saying: "That which men cannot decide is best left to Allah, who in good time makes all things plain."

Some time after this it chanced that an aged pilgrim, journeying to Mecca, craved refreshment at the tent of Jameel.

"My house is thy house, good father," said Jameel. "Enter!"

Then, while Ebn-Malek brewed a steaming cup of coffee for the pilgrim, and Ayeshah (his sister) set forth a savory repast of goat's flesh, dates stewed in butter, and cakes of millet baked on the glowing embers, Jameel filled the narghile—the water-pipe—for his guest,

and answered to the best of his ability the pilgrim's many questions concerning the roads, the trails across the desert, and the chances of falling in with a caravan or band of pilgrims traveling Mecca-ward.

At length, when he had eaten, the pilgrim rose and said:

"I will not linger, my son, for if I can reach the desert trail ere sundown I may perchance meet with this caravan of which thou tellest me. I thank thee for thy hospitality, and I will remember thee and thy household in my prayers at the holy city, if it be the will of Allah I should attain thither. This is the sole recompense I can offer for thy kindness to an old and broken man."

"It is the best of recompense," said Jameel; "I desire no other. For, mark thou, the last stranger that lodged with us left us the purse thou seest hanging there,—I would the genie of the Red Desert had flown away with him ere he had done so,—for since that time nothing but trouble hath come of it, seeing that my brother Ebn, here, and I cannot agree on its division, nor can any of our tribe decide the question for us."

"Strange," mused the pilgrim, eying the purse. "Tell me the story, my son. I was in my day accounted a clever hand at ciphering—ay, even to calculations of star distances and magnitudes; it may be I can solve this problem for thee."

"An thou canst do so," said Ebn, "we shall ever bless the day thou camest among us. Tell him the story, Jameel—first thy contention, then will I recite my argument."

"Well," said Jameel, "this, then, is the story: It was in the shearing month. Ebn and I journeyed together in search of our flocks, and pitched our tent on Jebel-Akhdar, the green mountain thou seest yonder. Here, while we sought our strayed sheep, a stranger came and

craved lodgment at our tent. We took him in, and, in his honor, killed each day a lamb—sometimes a lamb from Ebn's flock, sometimes one from mine, whichever came readiest to hand. So for seven days we fared, and on the eighth day the stranger disappeared. But Ayesshah, who came that day to visit us, brought word of him. He sent by her hand this purse containing sixteen pieces of silver,

nished the feast, wherefore I took six of the sixteen pieces of silver in payment of my three lambs. In like manner I gave to Ebn eight pieces of silver in payment of the lambs his flock had furnished on the second, third, fifth, and sixth days of the stranger's stay, and of the remaining two pieces of silver I gave one to Ebn and kept one myself, since the stranger had said that this, the eighth lamb,



"JAMEEL AND EBN-MALEK DEBATED ITS DIVISION WITHOUT REACHING AN AGREEMENT."

which, he said, was in payment for the lambs; as to the eighth lamb—which had that morning been killed—he bade Ebn and me divide between us, since he would not return to share it. Ayesshah prepared our meal that day, and while we feasted Ebn and I reckoned the lambs that were from his flock and those that were from mine in order that we might fairly divide the purse. Thus we found that on the first, fourth, and seventh days my flock had fur-

we were to share half and half. Such was the division I proposed, and fair it certainly seemeth to me. But thou shalt hear Ebn's contention."

"I am listening," said the pilgrim, turning to Ebn.

"I am a plain man," said Ebn, "and not versed in calculations, and, I confess, when I listen to Jameel's argument it seemeth sound, for since the stranger's silver paid for the lamb, surely it was his right to say half shalt thou have and half thou. Yet this lamb was also from my flock, so that of the eight lambs I furnished five and Jameel but three. Therefore, though I lack the wit to lay my finger on the flaw in Jameel's argument, I feel that if he receiveth six pieces of silver for his three lambs, it is but just that I should receive ten pieces for my five. Is it not so?"



"THE PILGRIM SAID WITH A SMILE: 'WHAT IF NEITHER OF YOU SHOULD BE RIGHT?'"

"What hast thou to say to this, my son?" said the pilgrim, turning to Jameel.

"I have said my say," replied Jameel; "it is for thee to decide which of us is right."

The pilgrim mused a moment in silence. Then, with a smile, he said: "What if *neither* of you should be right?"

At this question, so startling and unexpected, Jameel and Ebn-Malek stared at each other in open-mouthed astonishment.

"What if neither of us is right!" exclaimed Jameel, presently. "That is not possible! It is clear one of us is wrong, but it appears to

me that it is equally certain that the other must be right."

"Nevertheless," rejoined the pilgrim, quietly, "I ask again, what if neither of you should be right?"

"In that case," cried Ebn, laughing, "take thou the purse!"

"What sayest thou to this, Jameel?" asked the pilgrim.

"I say with Ebn, the purse is thine—ay, willingly!—if thou canst prove that neither his division nor mine is right."

"Nay, my son," interrupted the Pilgrim,

"look *thou!* Daughter," he continued, addressing Ayeshah, "give me of the millet cakes that are left eight. Behold, here are the eight lambs. There art thou, Ebn, there thou, Jameel, and here am I—the stranger. On the first day we three devour a lamb—is it not so? Yea? Here, then, is thy third, Ebn, here thy third, Jameel, and here the stranger's portion." The pilgrim broke a cake into three pieces, as he spoke, and set the fragments before the shepherds and himself.

"On the second day we eat another lamb—so!" He divided a second cake as he had the first. "On the third day another, on the fourth another, and so on the fifth, sixth, and seventh days. On the eighth day," continued the Pilgrim, "the last of the lambs is killed, but the stranger does not eat of it. Ayeshah takes his place. Here, then, Ebn, is thy third, and here, Jameel, are two thirds—thy portion and that of Ayeshah, thy wife. How many lambs were from thy flock, Jameel? Three, is it not so? Count, then, and tell me how many bits of cake thou hast before thee!"

"Nine," said Jameel, counting.

"Even so," said the pilgrim, "nine thirds! Three lambs thou gavest, Jameel, three thou hast consumed. Seest thou, then, that thou hast no claim on the purse? That is wholly Ebn's."

"Nay," said Ebn, pressing the purse into the pilgrim's palm, "it is thine. Nay, do not shake thy head; thou hast fairly earned it. Take it and farewell!"

For a long time after the pilgrim had departed the shepherds sat in thoughtful silence. At length Ebn spoke:

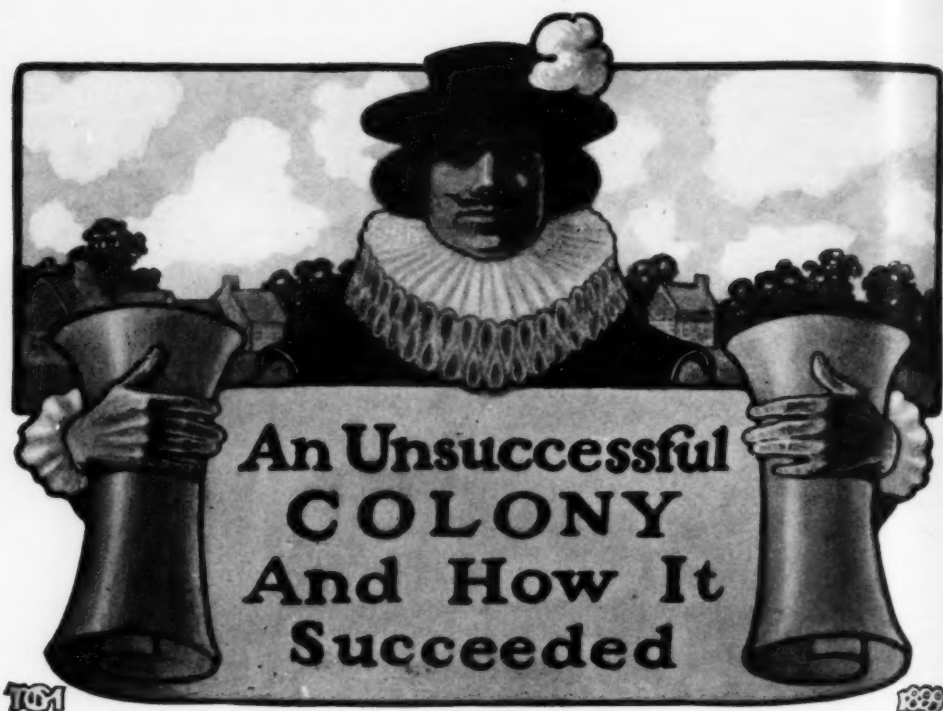
"Jameel, canst thou make head or hoof of all this?"

"Not I," replied Jameel. "I thought before that I was right, but now I know not if I am right, or thou, or he. Nothing is clear—"

"Yea," said Ebn, interrupting him; "this much at least is clear: by the hand of a stranger came the purse to us, by the hand of a stranger it goeth. It is the will of Allah!"



"BY THE HAND OF A STRANGER IT GOETH."



BY ELBRIDGE S. BROOKS.

"WE are now," Uncle Tom declared to his five young friends, "in about the center of what I should call the 'debatable ground,' the unsuccessful colony of New Albion, sometimes known as 'Plowden's Patent.' I suspect that you know next to nothing of it."

"Who was Plowden, and what did he get a patent on, and how?" demanded Jack.

"Well, we might say, Jack," Uncle Tom replied, with a twinkle in his eye, "on how-to-start-a-failure-so-that-the-fellow-who-comes-next-can-make-a-success-of-it—for that was the upshot of Plowden's Patent."

"That 's a good thing for the other fellow," Jack decided unhesitatingly; but Christine and Bert begged for an explanation.

They sat in the gallery above the foyer in their pleasant hotel in Philadelphia. From Jamestown and its ruined tower they had progressed leisurely northward, making most

interesting visits to what Roger called "the beginnings of things," and by a detour through Delaware by way of the old Swedish settlements of Wilmington and Chester, had come at last to Philadelphia, the "hub" of the Quaker commonwealth.

And it was there, even before the investigators started out "on the trail of Penn," as Jack described their errand, that Uncle Tom had informed them that they were in about the center of what he called the debatable land.

"Why do you call it the debatable land, Uncle Tom?" Bert inquired.

"Because it was always in debate, Bert," was Uncle Tom's reply. "From the Severn to Sandy Hook, from Maryland to New York, the land has been claimed, chartered, granted, sold, debated over, and fought for, in writs and pleas, as well as with pike and musket, more, I think, than any other portion of these United States.

Spain and France, Holland and Sweden, alike claimed right of ownership by discovery, exploration, or possession; but England had marked the land for her own, and in time asserted, proclaimed, and maintained her rights against all comers—even against those of her own flesh and blood. And of these the earliest and the most unsuccessful, as it was the most romantic, was this same Plowden's Patent which I have mentioned."

"Tell us about it, Uncle Tom," said Marian. "You did n't tell anything, and I never studied about it in history."

"No; it is one of the forgotten chapters in American history, my dear," her uncle replied; "and that is what makes it all the more mysterious and interesting. This is it: Once upon a time, four hundred years ago, in fact, there lived in the county of Shropshire, in England, an ancient and noble family by the name of Plowden. 'Kill Dane,' this surname meant in the old Saxon, from which you can see that they were alike brave, patriotic, and English. In 1632 the head of the family, Sir Edmund Plowden, who had gone to live in Ireland, believed that comfort, power, and fortune could best be obtained in the New World. So he applied to King Charles I. for that part of Virginia known as the Long Isle, with the understanding that he should be free from all obligations to the Governor and Company of Virginia."

"But Long Island was n't in Virginia, Uncle Tom, was it?" said Roger.

"Virginia, as I have told you, was a very elastic word," Uncle Tom replied. "It meant all of America that was not Florida on the south or New France on the north; and the discussions, with pen and sword, between Spaniard, Frenchman, and Englishman, as to what was and what was n't Virginia, made all North America, in fact, a debatable land."

"He had just given to one Roman Catholic knight—Sir George Calvert, later known as Lord Baltimore—the whole island of Newfoundland, called Avalon; so when Sir Edmund Plowden came with a similar request for another island he granted him the Long Isle in Virginia. But as it was n't exactly clear just where this Long Isle lay, King Charles issued a patent—that is, a paper giving him possession—to Sir

Edmund Plowden and those associated with him, granting him 'forty leagues square' of the American continent, with all the isles and islands of the sea within ten leagues of the shore."

"That 's a pretty good slice of America, I should say. About one hundred and twenty miles every way, and thirty miles out to sea," was Jack's calculation.

"Good measure, too," his uncle added. "For, according to the boundaries in the grant, Plowden's Patent really embraced the present States of New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, and Pennsylvania, with all the Atlantic coast from Cape May to Sandy Hook, and with Long Island thrown in for good measure."

"But say—why—Uncle Tom! How could he do all that?" demanded Roger, a trifle bewildered. "Where did the Dutchman and the Swede come in?"

"They did n't come in at all, in King Charles's calculations," Uncle Tom replied. "What Charles Stuart believed he had the right to give he gave. Other people's rights did n't count."

"So Plowden really got here first, did he?" queried Bert.

"Well," said Uncle Tom, deliberately, "he first began to think of thinking to get here first"—an assertion that amused his hearers greatly.

"Never do to-day what you can just as well put off till to-morrow, eh, Uncle Tom?" said Jack. "He was that sort of a man, was he?"

"Something of that kind," his uncle replied. "The fact is, however, that the 'Right Honorable and Mighty Lord Edmund, by Divine Providence Lord Proprietor, Earl Palatine, Governor and Captain-General of the Province of New Albion,' as he called himself and his kingdom, had more titles than dollars, and more intentions than energy. Indeed, he took so long to buy off his associates and to get ready to begin that smarter and more wide-awake men got ahead of him, and he awoke to find himself out in the cold, claiming rights he could not defend, a patent he could not prove, and lands that others had occupied."

"That was hard," commented Roger.

"How did it happen so?" asked Marian.

"While he was trying to gather a company

of colonists for what he declared to be the healthiest, pleasantest, and richest plantation in North America," Uncle Tom explained, "along comes Lord Baltimore to King Charles and complains that his province of Avalon, in Newfoundland, is neither healthy, pleasant, nor rich, and begging a grant of land in Virginia, which, out of compliment to the queen, he will call Maryland."

"But that belonged to Plowden's Patent," said Roger.

"That made no difference to generous King Charles," said Uncle Tom. "Boundaries were very indefinite, you see, and Lord Baltimore was a good friend and supporter whom it was wise to favor. So Lord Baltimore received Maryland and a part of Pennsylvania, and Sir Edmund Plowden had a big slice of his patent lopped off before he even knew that he owned it."

"Why did n't he hurry up and get to work, then?" cried Jack, indignantly. "He deserved to lose it."

"He got away finally, in 1634," Uncle Tom continued, "but he does not appear to have brought any colonists with him. He sailed up the Delaware, however, and about opposite Wilmington, on the Jersey side, he found some English 'squatters' from Connecticut. He made them recognize him as Governor of New Albion, and then went down to Virginia and 'rested' for eight or nine years."

"Well! he was energetic, was n't he?" exclaimed Jack, with sarcasm.

"I imagine it was that he had no capital," said Uncle Tom. "Meanwhile, as time was passing and opportunities came, other go-ahead 'promoters' were on the ground, working it irrespective of Plowden's Patent. The world had heard about this healthiest, pleasantest, and richest plantation in America which Sir Edmund Plowden was letting slip through his fingers, and societies and syndicates were staking out the ground. Lord Baltimore's people, as I have told you, appropriated Maryland in 1634; Christina of Sweden, the famous girl queen of the North, sent out colonists in 1639, claiming and occupying the land from Cape May to Philadelphia; and in 1634 Captain Young or Yong, an English adventurer, sailed up the

Delaware on a hunt for a passage into the Mediterranean Sea."

"The Mediterranean Sea!" exclaimed Marian.

"Why, Uncle Tom! was the man crazy?"

"Crazy? Oh, no, my dear," Uncle Tom replied. "He believed what the Indians told him."

"Well," laughed Jack, "they must have been shaky in their geography! What has the Mediterranean Sea to do with the Delaware River?"

"Well," his uncle replied, "their Mediterranean Sea and that of Captain Yong were something altogether different. For when they told the captain of the great inland sea four days' journey beyond the western mountains, it was the captain who jumped to the conclusion that it was the Mediterranean, when really the Indians meant the Great Lakes."

"Of course! that explains it," remarked Marian.

"They were n't so far out of the way as Captain Yong," said Roger.

"Anyhow, Captain Yong's Mediterranean trip was stopped by the shallow water and rocky ledges above Trenton," Uncle Tom continued. "But his reports only whetted the appetites of other land-grabbers and played havoc with Plowden's Patent."

"How could they?" said Jack. "He had it, had n't he?"

"He had it and he did n't have it," Uncle Tom replied. "Possession, you know, is nine points of the law, and Englishmen, Dutchmen, and Swedes, who cared not a rap for Plowden or his patent, were parceling the land of his unsuccessful colony among themselves."

"Oh, I've no patience with the man!" cried Marian. "Why did n't he do something?"

"Because others could do it so much better, my dear," her uncle responded. "When, in 1644, he really did attempt to make a stand for his 'palatinate,' as he termed it, the captain and crew of his vessel conspired to kill, lose, or maroon him, and seize the ship and supplies for themselves."

"Oh, but did they, Uncle Tom?" said Christine.

"They did, my dear," Uncle Tom replied. "Pity was not a very plentiful commodity in those hard old days. They put him ashore

without food, clothes, or arms on Smith's Island, at the entrance to Delaware Bay. But two young fellows who were faithful to their master, and were not in the plot, jumped overboard and swam to the shore to keep him company.

"The castaways were fortunate enough, at last, to spy and hail an English sloop, after being thus marooned for four days, and were taken back to Virginia," Uncle Tom continued. "But the mutineers ran against the Swedish colonists at Wilmington, where they were held captive, sent back to Virginia, and punished, the chief conspirators being hung.

"But the Swedish governor declared to Plowden that the land along the Delaware belonged to Queen Christina of Sweden, and that neither Plowden nor his colonists would be allowed there without the queen's consent; and this was final. Plowden could never make head against this Swedish opposition, so, you see, he lost Maryland, Delaware, and this portion of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Thereupon Plowden went to stout old Governor Stuyvesant in New York (or New Amsterdam, as it was then called), complaining against the Swedes, and claiming, also, that he owned all the land extending from the west shore of the Hudson to Virginia."

"I don't believe that agreed well with old Governor Stuyvesant," said Roger.

"Indeed it did not," Uncle Tom replied. "Governor Stuyvesant laughed at him, told him that Delaware (or the South River country, as he called it) belonged to Holland, and forthwith went down there and constructed forts almost against the Swedish forts. Of course this made trouble, for Governor Printz the Swede was as stubborn as Governor Stuyvesant the Dutchman. From words they came to blows, and at last, in 1654, Stuyvesant marched down here with an 'army,' defeated the Swedes, captured their forts and towns, forced them to swear allegiance to Holland, and actually wiped New Sweden off the map. And again poor Plowden and his high-sounding, royal patent were altogether forgotten and shoved aside."

"Marooned once more, eh?" said Jack.

"As a colonizer, yes," returned Uncle Tom, with a nod at Jack's comparison. "But he did n't give up even then. He went back to England, published a pamphlet describing his enterprise, and tried to form a colony of three thousand men to go over and settle New Albion. But his promises were not considered good for much, and though he did secure a pass for about a hundred and fifty colonists, men, women, and children, to go to New Albion, that was the last that was heard of the expedition. They never went."

"Hard luck, was n't it?" said Roger, who was beginning to sympathize with this unsuccessful Earl Palatine.

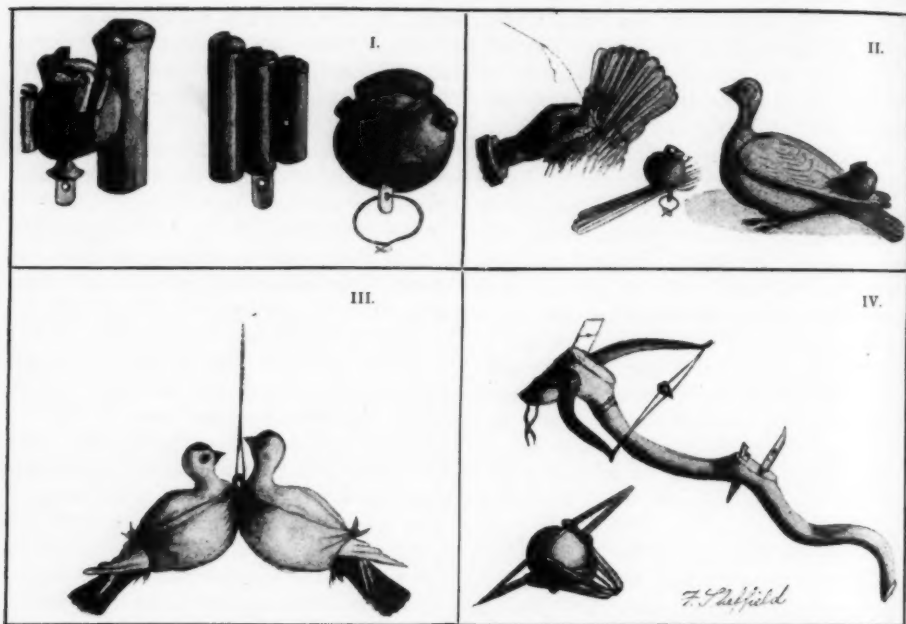
"But his failure," said Uncle Tom, "was, as I have told you, the path to success—for others. The Yankees came over from the New England shores and grabbed up as much of Long Island as the Dutch could n't hold, and that about finished 'Sir Edmund Plowden, the Earl of New Albion.' For soon after, in 1664, England's Duke of York established a gigantic claim that practically took in all the land between the St. Lawrence and Chesapeake Bay, Massachusetts, east of the Connecticut, being about the only exception. And that princely appropriation settled the question of Plowden's Patent for good and all."

"And what became of Sir Edmund Plowden?" asked Christine, sympathizing with misfortune and pitying failure.

"He died, about 1660," Uncle Tom replied, "at sword's point with his wife and his eldest son, still styling himself Earl Palatine, governor and captain-general of New Albion in North America, leaving all his titles, patents, and claims to his second son, and commanding him to settle a colony for the occupation and cultivation of New Albion. But the American Revolution came; the republic was independent. The colonists of New Albion became, at the conclusion of the war, citizens of the United States, and Plowden's Patent came to a sudden, final, and untimely end."

PIGEONS OF PEKING.

BY ALFRED D. SHEFFIELD.



I. DIFFERENT FORMS OF PIGEON-WHISTLES. II. HOW THE WHISTLE IS ATTACHED. III. HOW PIGEONS ARE CARRIED. IV. BOWGUN FOR SHOOTING PELLETS OF CLAY TO STUN PIGEONS.

THE Chinese have made pigeon-flying the decoying game that it is because they like any kind of "playing for keeps." Even in kite-flying, they fix little hooks to their kite-strings and try to pull in each other's kites, and count it fair to keep any kite that drops into their yards. They will tell you that a kite or a strange pigeon that comes to your place, if given up, takes away your "family luck." So you must tear the kite and keep the pigeon. But when you see the town dandies sauntering out with their fans and bird-cages to watch the noon kite-flying, criticizing the flocks and their tactics, and arguing the fine points of decoying, you guess that "family luck" has very little to do with their game.

To decoy strange pigeons, pigeon-keepers

must first train their flocks to "fly in spirals"—that is, to rise steadily in circles without straying far from the home roof. Pigeons naturally fly together in circles. Even wild pigeons wheel about in flocks before straggling off to the fields. Chinese make their birds eager for circling by keeping them shut up in a wicker house built on the ground around the dove-cote; and they cure their birds of straggling by pelting them with pebbles when they try to alight anywhere except on one spot—the ridge-pole of the roof facing their wicker house. The flock must alight here in a bunch, and immediately walk down to the eaves. This is done to bring any strange pigeon among them down within sight of the grain, which is then scattered on the floor of

the wicker house. Pigeons are fed only after flying, for unless hungry they are lazy and unmanageable. Their food is millet, sorghum-seed, or corn, which their keepers use to get as much work from them as possible for as little feeding as possible. When there is much flying and calling down to do, they are usually fed with millet, which is so small that it keeps them eating a long while without filling them. At other times their food is sorghum-seed. Corn is not very good for pigeons, but they are so fond of it that pigeon-keepers usually have it on hand to call them down when they are already fed.

Chinese talk of three regions of pigeon flight: the "sparrow region," just above the housetops; the "crow region," where the crows pass over the city at daybreak; and the "eagle region." In every flock are several strong-winged birds that will rise to the eagle region. These are the "high-fliers," which are usually sent up first, carrying whistles, as a challenge to other flocks to join them. When they have mounted to some height, the heavier-winged birds, or "low-fliers," are sent up to meet them. A few stay-at-home birds are kept back to call the others down, which they do by flying round the roof and clapping their wings. Pigeon-whistles were in early times put on the birds to scare away hawks. Nowadays the hawks do not mind them at all, but they are still useful for attracting stray pigeons, for signaling, and for guiding the younger pigeons when flocks become mixed.

In Peking, flocks are sent up at sunrise, at noon, and just before sundown. Neighboring flocks always join, and their keepers then try each to draw apart his flock with call-birds, so as to bring with it any unwary pigeons from the other flocks. If a stranger is brought to the roof, the keeper coaxes it down with his own birds by throwing millet into the wicker cage.

No one ever demands back a pigeon lost in this way. Two friends will sometimes "play live pigeon," that is, give back each other's birds that may be captured from the flock during the game; but the rule is to "play dead pigeon," or, as boys say, "for keeps."

FIRST STORY.

THE FLIGHT OF "MU WHA TOU."

EVERY morning, when the crows were all back from the cemetery pines, and the sun rose upon the polished housetops that stretched unbrokenly for miles to the blue-black city walls, "Little American" had watched small clouds of white-winged pigeons circling high overhead—so high, sometimes, that he would not have found them but for the faint singing of the reed whistles at their tails. He was so enchanted by the dreamy whirling and butterfly-like glimmer of the flocks, turning deftly in the open sky, that at first he supposed, as other foreigners do, that their owners sent them up just for the sport of their flying. That is, indeed, part of the reason, but the morning when "Mu Wha Tou" went astray Little American learned that there is something more.

Mu Wha Tou was one of Little American's first ten pigeons. They were all *tientes*,—white with black tails, and each with a black spot like a watermelon-seed on its forehead. On all of them, as high-bred pigeons must have it, the white and black met in regular lines (without a straggling black feather among the white or a white among the black), except on Mu Wha Tou, whose name, meaning "She Speckle-head," was given her for some rings of black on her neck. These rings, which grew out mysteriously some weeks after Little American had bought her, very much cheapened her in the eyes of Li Loo, the old gate-keeper, who had charge of the flock, and who taught Little American the secrets of pigeon-keeping. But the rings caused no loss of caste with the other pigeons. Her big mate, indeed, strutted after her with great pride; for she was really a fine bird, with wide-awake eyes and long, muscular wings.

"When Mu Wha Tou flies," said Li Loo, "she'll hit up a pretty pace. Those pale eye-rims come by flying in the eagle region."

For several weeks none of the flock were allowed to fly. They had first to become at home in their new brick pigeon-house. This Li Loo had built on the ground against a wall, facing the house on which they were to

alight. Around the pigeon-house was a cage of wickerwork, big enough for a man to move about in; and in this cage they were always fed, so that at any time Li Loo could call them in, shut the wicker door behind him, and catch any pigeon he wished. When he let them run around the court they were still secured from flying, for Li Loo had "sewn their wings"—that is, he had sewn together the first eight feathers of each wing, so that, even when spread like a half-opened fan, it could not catch the air.

Every morning they were thrown up on the roof of the pigeon-house, for with sewn wings they could safely flutter down, though they could not fly up. This was to make them know their alighting-place, so that, when free, they would go to no other. How soon they should be loosed depended on their behavior. At first, with Mu Wha Tou leading, they would all scramble up the slippery roof and stand at the ridge-pole, alert and uneasy, turning up their little red eyes when neighboring flocks passed overhead. Four younglings, with "Topknot" and "Sleepy Dame," less spirited birds, then lost their strangeness, and would saunter back to the eaves, and sit contentedly preening their feathers, or dozing in the warm sun. But Mu Wha Tou and "Big Tientse" stayed alone by the chimney, listening curiously to the hum of the big city, starting at the far-away calls of fruit-peddlers, and looking off to the East Gate, where the bulb-shaped towers of the mosque rose in the morning haze.

So long, indeed, was Mu Wha Tou in bringing her mind to her new home that at the first flying Li Loo would not risk losing Big Tientse with her. He would not even send her up with the other pigeons, but held her in his hand until the flock was near alighting.

The first flying was timid and stealthy enough. "It is a run across the open in an enemy's country," said Li Loo, squinting at the sun to catch sight of any whistleless flock that might be manoeuvring unnoticed in its dazzle. Then he sent Little American to climb upon a back wall, where he could watch the roof of Kao Chün, and give alarm if Kao Chün's pigeons flew again.

Only Topknot, Sleepy Dame, and the four

younglings were to fly. The first two had lined their cell with broom-straws in promise of nesting, and the others were giddy squabs whose voices broke into infantile squeals when they tried to coo, and who had not flown enough to turn their eyes red, much less to learn the straight flight to their country home. From his lookout Little American saw them walk up the roof and stand in a line, nervously stretching their wings, from which the confining threads had been cut. Then a bamboo rod was waved above the eaves, and they flew up together, making a wide circle over the houses, and rising vigorously into the air.

It would have been easy for a practised eye to tell that they were a new flock, for they straggled out on the turn, not knowing which would lead. They flew without bearings, too, for at the dip of their circle they lurched out of range of the alighting-roof, and became confused at the giant elms of the American compound, which seethed under them in clouds of green. Any one of them, flying alone, would have fetched up hopelessly in the Granary waste lands, but the first commandment of the pigeons is, "Fly together," so they kept beating in uncertain circles overhead.

At last they began to settle toward the great temple, where some gray wild pigeons offered to join flocks. But Li Loo flung a pigeon on the alighting-spot, and the six, catching the quick glimmer of its white wing against the blue lime roof, veered about. They passed close over Little American's head, noiselessly except for the soft whipping of their full-feathered wings. Little American looked nervously at Kao Chün's bare roof, for the fluttering of a pigeon there might lure aside his half-trained birds. But Kao Chün gave no sign; and Little American chuckled with relief, not dreaming that at that moment Kao Chün, with a cageful of the veterans of his flock, was squatting complacently in the lane behind Little American's house, waiting for what he had guessed would happen next.

As the six, on poised wings, were settling toward the roof, another pigeon was thrown up to meet them. It was Mu Wha Tou. Li

Loo had thrown her skilfully, flinging her straight as a stone, to catch herself precisely as the flock overtook her. But at the same instant six other tienteses were thrown from the lane, shooting up like rockets, to burst into flight around her, in the very midst of Little American's flock. The bewildered birds, carried along by the strong dash of the new-comers, would have missed their alighting-place, had not one of the youngers, spying his mate on the roof, turned out his tail like a fin and led them down. Mu Wha Tou, however, fresh-winged, and startled at her new freedom, beat up for the open sky.

It was then that the new-comers showed their tactics. They rose around her, hemming her into their circles, and bearing down on the turn to bring her within call of Kao Chün's roof.

But Mu Wha Tou had caught the keen, sweet smell of sorghum blowing in from the fields, and it had awakened the home-hunger.

When the flock settled, she simply mounted above it, and, but for a resolute spurt on its part, would have launched on the straight flight. She was now in the middle region,—the "region of a crow's flight,"—rising in a slow spiral till she could see far beyond the city walls, where the grain-boats were threading the checkered green plain, and the eastern hills pushed their icy purple edges into the sky. As Li Loo had promised, she was setting the flock a pretty pace; but they were picked fliers, and she could not shake free of them. They passed into the eagle region, where Little American's eyes could barely follow them. The seven pigeons were reduced to the size of gnats, sparkling white when they turned to the sun, but almost transparent against the wind-swept blue. From time to time a solitary gnat would appear to move apart from the rest, take a straight course over the West Gate, and then turn irresolutely, when the flock would trail out like a floating spider-web and draw it in.

Mu Wha Tou's flight had now been noticed by many pigeon-keepers, whose flocks were rising from the distant housetops like puffs of white smoke. Kao Chün, too, sent up a big second flock of low-fliers to meet the seven,

which must soon begin descending. Mu Wha Tou had failed to sight her home, and though her companions, on stiff, half-shut wings, now dropped in swift zigzag lurchings toward the second flock, she kept docilely behind them. In the middle region they came upon the new flocks, weaving dizzy circles and counter-circles, until Mu Wha Tou, too confused to wheel in time, was drawn aimlessly from one to another.

Li Loo drove Little American's pigeons up on the roof, but could do nothing more, for it would be madness to fly his new birds into the mazes of trained decoys. He waited till their last circling, and then cast Big Tientse up on the roof, in the hope that Mu Wha Tou might know her mate and be coaxed aside. But it was all in vain. Kao Chün's second flock closed over her like a mountain mist, and swept her to its alighting.

A little later, Kao Chün's pigeons suddenly flew up with a great clattering, but Mu Wha Tou was not among them.

"They are scared up by the net," said Li Loo to the tearful Little American. "When a strange pigeon goes to the eaves, Kao Chün can climb up softly below it with the hoop-net. His boy then watches from the yard until it begins preening under its wing, and then signals to cast up. That has happened to Mu Wha Tou."

So Little American found out why the pigeons were flying every morning, with their tricky circling and soft, tremulous whistles. Big Tientse called for his mate in loud wailing coos for many days, and then, seeming to forget her, mated with "Topsy Skew," the heroine of the next story.

SECOND STORY.

A CHESS GAME IN THE SKY.

THESE are the rules for flying by spirals which Little American copied on a slate and hung in the wicker pigeon-house:

Fly immediately on opening the wooden doors for the day. Pigeons take the air more eagerly after penning up, and are more promptly called down when hungry. First drive up high-fliers with whistles. When they have risen to the crow region, throw up scout-fliers by twos and threes to join them. Your pi-

geons can then take up a stranger flying at any height. If the high-fliers join with a neighbor flock, or the scouts fall in with a stranger, send up the body of your flock, keeping back only call-birds. This second flock will rise to meet the high-fliers, sweeping in scout-birds and strangers. When the pigeons are all massed in one flock, flying without rifts or stragglers, fetch them down with the call-birds, which should be held ready in your hands. A call-bird flung high into the air will rise in a spiral to the flock, which will lower for it only slightly. If tossed gently above the roof a call-bird will circle without rising until the flock settles to it. If merely loosed by opening the hand, a call-bird will fly only to the roof, and the flock will pitch down immediately to alight. This call is usually too abrupt, and should be used only when the stranger is a young bird, or heavy-winged, or lazy. Sometimes, however, even an old bird will be scared down by it, thinking that the flock is careening out of the path of a hawk. If no strange flocks join, you may train your new or young pigeons, either sending them up with escorts, or throwing them into the flock on its last circling.

So every morning, when the early bell boomed in the temple, Little American flew his pigeons by the rules, until they learned their parts in the game, and liked it. The high-fliers would spring from their cells when the doors swung back, and clatter up without touching the roof; scout-birds would flutter against the wickerwork in their hurry to begin zigzagging after strangers; and the call-birds would lie quietly in Little American's hands, turning up their keen, bead-like eyes when the shadows of passing flocks touched the house. Their master, too, learned to know them apart, no matter how far off they were flying, nor how mixed with other flocks, and could tell just what every one could be counted on to do. But there was one pigeon that seemed out of sorts with the game; not that she balked at her part, but that she did it freakishly, as if meaning to do something different.

She was a little hooded tiente, called "Hsiao Chueh Wu" ("Little Topsy Skew"), because her feathers, although faultless, seemed, like her flying, always to be starting awry. Her waywardness came, no doubt, from her very odd bringing up. A Shantung farmer, driven north by the great flood, had brought her to Little American when she was a mere lump of pink flesh, with yellow down and black bead eyes. The farmer said the old birds had

been tumblers, but had flown straight north on the morning that the river broke through. If the squab were "man-fed," he declared, it would grow into the cleverest of fliers.

Pigeons feed their squabs by taking the young one's bill in their own and thrusting into it the softened grain from their crops. So Little American chewed up sorghum, and taught Topsy Skew to thrust its bill between his teeth for it. The squab learned its part, however, better than Little American learned his; for, in spite of constant feedings, it grew thin and undersized, and its feathers turned up at the end. At last Little American took it to Li Loo.

"Its crop is swelled like a door-knob, but it keeps squealing for more."

Li Loo gently pinched the crop. It flattened, and the air hissed from Topsy's bill.

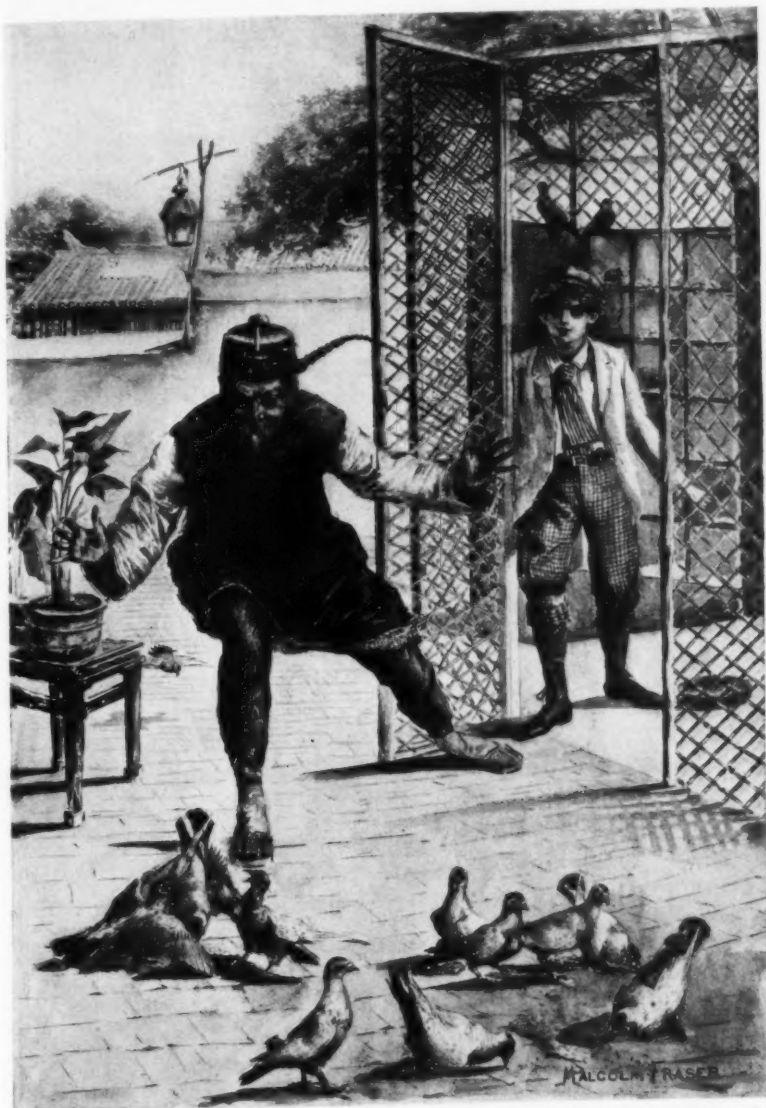
"You must n't *blow* the sorghum into it," laughed Li Loo. "A pigeon is not a turtle, that it can live on northwest wind!"

After that Topsy Skew fared better, and though she remained small, she was finely shaped—wide in the chest, with long taper wings and the large, pale eye-rims of a high-flier. Her action in flying was perfect. Heavier-winged birds rustle through the air; high-fliers make a gentle whipping; but Topsy Skew cut the air with the faintest thin whisper, as of a finger drawn over stretched silk.

She had the hood and long white bill of a tumbler, but, never seeing any tumbling, she never learned the tumbler's queer mounting flight. When the instinct was strong upon her she would hitch quickly, as if checked by something thrown in her path, and then, by a strong pulse of her big fans, would regain her place in the flock. Her masters did not care, however, about the tumbling, which, after all, is a mere fancy trick, of no use in circle-flying, where it only puts out the other birds. But they watched her wayward starts and hoverings until they hit upon a plan for playing her off as a decoy.

They chose a windless morning, of the clear, ringing kind of sky which keeps pigeon flocks scudding gleefully for hours. The sun was just breaking over the city wall when Little American rode his black donkey to the

North Tower, carrying Topsy Skew tied in a Skew picked her way above their path, moving handkerchief. She was not trained to ing in uncertain curves without lowering, even



"LI LOO, STEPPING UP, NOISELESSLY AS A CAT, NABBED HER FROM THE GROUND." (SEE PAGE 325.)

straight flying, and her masters knew that if loosed at that distance she would circle to a great height. The middle region was still flecked with belated crows, so that Topsy

when she drew in sight of the home roof, which no doubt looked bare and unfamiliar in the early light.

This was just the movement wanted of her.

In a moment seven high-fliers shot noiselessly out from Kao Chün's roof, and Little American, straining his eyes from the North Tower, saw that his bait was taken. Kao Chün was plainly hoping to draw the stranger down without attracting rival flocks, for his birds wore no whistles, and cut their way directly up, in brisk, clean, swinging turns. The upper air sparkled in the sunrise, and the pigeons nerved themselves for a vigorous chase. Topsy Skew was moving in evasive loops and figure eights above her pursuers, who swept toward her in a stubborn ring.

The crafty Li Loo now loosed the high-fliers of Little American's flock, chasing them up with great gusto, as if he himself had just spied the stranger. His pigeons carried whistles, shrill reeds and mellow-toned gourds, and they rushed singing upward at the other flock, below which they were soon describing a third ring.

Kao Chün was now forced to risk a move. To keep the rival high-fliers from joining his own, he must send up his second flock. This flock, as Li Loo well knew, had half-trained and young pigeons, which, with their leaders high out of reach, would be closed in upon from above and below by Little American's pigeons. But Kao Chün was bent on drawing his rival's birds away from the stranger, for they carried all the whistles, and, if once joined, would take the lead over his own fliers. His second flock dashed out with screaming whistles, promptly followed by a second flock from Little American, whose high-fliers now dropped to them, and all began whirling in a mingled cloud, three flocks swept into one, while Kao Chün's picked fliers, high overhead, still circled under Topsy Skew.

The bigger a flock, the stronger it draws, so both Kao Chün and Li Loo had turned out their pigeons in a body, scout-birds and all. When Little American came galloping back from the city wall he found only two call-birds left in the pigeon-house, and he carried these to the lane behind Kao Chün's house, believing that his rival's only call-birds would be new or young. He crouched in the narrow alley, where he caught glimpses of the scudding flocks between tile walls and elms, and

heard excited voices from Kao Chün's yard. Some one was crying out that Kao Chün must call down his pigeons to save them; but no call-birds were thrown, for his upper flock was close upon Topsy Skew, and he would not stop the chase. Little American, too, could not bring down his flock yet, without deserting the clever little decoy. So the pigeons whirled on at a dead-lock, and their masters looked to Topsy Skew for the turning of the game.

She was now skimming above her pursuers in long curves, drooping to left or right, when she thought to cut by them to her own flock below. But Kao Chün's fliers veered out to meet her, as if drawing a charmed ring to hem her in. Gleeful shouts arose from Kao Chün's court,—for the whole family was watching the game,—and Little American grew anxious. Topsy Skew, however, began a fitful, hovering movement, as if tempted to a new dodge. The puzzled fliers spread to cut under her again, when she suddenly tripped in her course, mounting, and poisoning for an instant like a hawk. Then she threw herself over backward, dropping in a string of somersaults, like a pinwheel of sparkling feathers, straight through the charmed ring to the lower air! Here she was caught up by her own flock. It was Little American's turn to laugh now, for Kao Chün's picked fliers were left high and dry, his new and young pigeons were mixed with a bigger and better trained flock of Little American's pigeons, and Topsy Skew was safe!

At this moment a tientse shot up from Kao Chün's roof. Little American, guessing from its startled flight that his rival had risked a new bird, flung both of his call-birds with it.

But the new bird clattered up so boldly that Little American saw that he had again been outwitted. Kao Chün had expected his ambush, and kept back an old high-flier, which, instead of drawing down the flock, carried up his last call-birds. This held the flock back until Kao Chün's fliers pitched down to it, and Little American's chance was lost.

The rest of the game Kao Chün played alone. He tossed a pigeon up on his roof, making his flock instantly drop apart from



"LITTLE AMERICAN, GUESSING THAT HIS RIVAL HAD RISKED A NEW BIRD, FLUNG BOTH HIS CALL-BIRDS."

Little American's. Then, seeing that his new and young birds had safely followed, he trained the rest of his new birds, flinging them, one by one, into the flock. Li Loo and Little American looked on in helpless rage, for their flock was now shelved, in its turn, and they had no call-birds left to bring it down.

At last, as a parting flaunt, Little American thought, his old Mu Wha Tou, the captured pigeon, was thrown up. As on the day when Kao Chün had captured her and Little American had lost her, Kao Chün's flock gathered her into their number, swept her to their alighting-spot, and the game was done.

THIRD STORY.

THE RECAPTURE OF MU WHA TOU.

THE enemies of the pigeons are three—the weasel, the hawk, and the cat. Of these the weasel is deadliest, for it can work into a pigeon-house by the merest crack, and its rule is to kill all. The hawk is a gallant robber, for he takes but one, and that by fair strategy in the open sky.

The slyest enemies of the pigeons, however, and those they most dread, are the cats. They will spring into a pigeon-house at sundown, when the pigeons have gone to their cells to be shut in for the night. When this happens the flock is stampeded and numbers are lost, for pigeons are blind in the dark, and cannot be called down.

So when, one dark night, several months after the flight of Mu Wha Tou, Little American was wakened by the sudden screech of a pigeon-whistle passing overhead in the darkness, and saw from his window a red glow over Kao Chün's roof, he knew that some cat had scared out his rival's flock at roosting-time, and that Kao Chün was trying the "fire decoy"—burning corn-stalks soaked in oil to draw down his panic-stricken birds. He knew, too, that after a night-flying, Mu Wha Tou might be tempted to alight with his flock again.

The rule is that after three alightings a strange pigeon will never be drawn down again, and Mu Wha Tou had twice been brought to roof by Little American's pigeons without being taken. The first time she had followed them to the eaves, and had just poked over her head and drooped her wings to join the birds feeding in the wicker cage, when one of Kao Chün's call-birds, cleverly thrown over the house, startled her up and led her to its home. The second time she alighted was by a misleading flurry at the splitting of the two flocks. This time she knew her mistake, and could not be coaxed from the ridge-pole. It is allowed by the rules of decoying to stun a strange pigeon with the crossbow by shooting it in the crop (though not to maim its wing). So Li Loo then took down the cunning bow—an odd-shaped thing, so stout that it took two coolies to string it, and so nicely sighted by a

needle-hole in a bamboo stem and a red bead on a thread that it would hit a fly on the wall. But Mu Wha Tou knew about that, too, and promptly clattered off. She was not to be brought to roof again. But there was now a chance that by morning she would be scared and hungry enough to alight on the ground if she saw pigeons feeding in the open court in front of the wicker house—especially if she saw red corn; for sorghum-fed pigeons are gluttonous after red corn.

At daylight Little American saw by the waving trees that it was a morning of west wind. The yellow edge of a great dust-cloud was moving up the sky, threatening a day of closed windows and lamplight. Already the copper sky was ugly for flying. Little American's flock struggled up in slanting circles, whirling high into the air when it stemmed the wind, and dipping to the very housetops on the turn.

The whistles sounded out only at the dipping, because in the teeth of the wind they became choked; but they sounded enough to call back some of Kao Chün's stragglers, which could be seen rising and falling in the storm, as they cut their way toward the flock. Little American would not stop for these, and chased his flock back from the roof again and again, until he saw, as they mounted from a long sweep behind the great temple, that a new tiente was among his birds, one with the long wings and spotted neck of Mu Wha Tou.

Li Loo knew her at once. He had climbed the wall to watch for her, and now ran for the corn-bag, shouting to Little American to hold back the call-birds until the flock should careen directly over the brick-paved yard by the pigeon-house. On they came, laboring over the housetops, keeping together in perfect order, but whipping their half-shut wings unwillingly, and turning down their hungry little eyes as they drew close overhead. This was the moment. Little American chased out the call-birds just as Li Loo threw a handful of big red kernels dancing upon the pavement. The greedy call-birds flung themselves upon it, and the flock, Mu Wha Tou and all, dropped straight between the houses to the ground. Mu Wha Tou stood a-tiptoe as she

touched ground, as if scared to find herself there, and ready to spring into the air at a movement. No one moved, however, so she began warily to snatch up the kernels within reach.

"How will you touch a skittish thing like that?" muttered Little American, from the pigeon-house. "Better try the crossbow again."

"You can't shoot at her, ducking about among the other birds," said Li Loo. "Watch me, and learn the baby-pigeon trick."

Li Loo was standing back against the wall as he spoke. He held his hands together without stirring, and Little American now saw some new-fledged squabs poking out their heads from his big sleeves. He kept his eyes on a little heap of corn, around which he had scattered the handful which the flock were eating.

The birds, quickly pecking up every stray corn, now began to draw into a close circle around this little pile, Mu Wha Tou even forgetting to look up at Li Loo, who quietly set

the young pigeons loose upon the ground. Seeing the corn, the eager squabs ran squealing and shaking their wings among the other birds. Then Little American saw what was to happen. Squabs always spread their wings when they squeal to be fed. Even when they can pick up for themselves, they begin by squealing and fanning at the other pigeons. So these squabs pushed among the unheeding feeders, clumsily shaking their silly fans over their heads. In a moment Mu Wha Tou was "hooded" between two of them, and as if blindfolded; whereupon Li Loo, stepping up behind the three, noiselessly as a cat, nabbed her from the ground.

Little American was so happy at the "baby-pigeon trick" that he gave Mu Wha Tou as a present to Li Loo, who clipped out her speckled feathers, and glued in proper white feathers so neatly that no one knew her for *wha tou*, or "speckled head." And she was sold for a big sum to a farmer, who took her to Shantung, so that nobody knows what he said when the black feathers grew out again.





BY MARGARET MINOR.

It was an October afternoon, and through Indian summer's tulle-like haze a low-swinging sun sent shafts of scarlet light at the highest peaks of the Blue Ridge. The sweet-gum leaves looked like blood-colored stars as they floated slowly to the ground, and brown chestnuts gleamed satin-like through their gaping burs; while over all there rested a dense stillness, cut now and then by the sharp yelp of a dog as he scurried through the bushes after a rabbit.

Surrounded by this splendid autumn beauty stood Mountain Top Inn, near the crest of the Blue Ridge in Rockfish Gap, its historical value dating from the time when Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe, after a long and spirited discussion in one of its low-ceiled rooms, decided upon the location of the University of Virginia.

On the porch of this old inn there now sat a little boy, idly swinging a pair of sun-tanned legs. Occasionally he tickled an old liver-colored hound that lay dozing in a limp heap; but being rewarded only by toothless snaps at very long intervals, he finally grew tired of this amusement, and stretching himself out on his back, he began to dream with wide-open eyes. At these dream-times, when he let his thoughts loose, they always bore him to the very same field, and here his fancy painted

pictures with the vivid colors of a boy's imagination: pictures so strong that they left him flushed and tingling with pride; again, pictures that brought a cool, choking feeling to his throat; and at times pictures that made his childish mouth quiver and droop. Among all of these thought-born scenes, at intervals there would stand out the real ones, scenes that were etched on the clean walls of his memory in everlasting strokes.

He never tired thinking of that first morning—that morning when all the world seemed gilded with sunshine and throbbing with martial music. His grandfather had lifted him up on one of the "big gate" posts to see the soldiers march by. With mingled feelings of admiration and childish envy he had watched them drill for many weeks, but they had never seemed such real, grand soldiers until now, as they came marching by with quick, firm steps, keeping time to the clear, staccato notes, marching off to real battle-fields. It was all so beautiful, splendid, and gay—the music, the soldiers, the people, the hurrahing! It stirred his sentient little body through and through with a kind of joy, and he thought it so strange that his mother's eyes were full of tears.

Just a few days later he had listened eagerly to the sharp, crackling sound of guns

and the rumbling thunder of cannon, so near that the air seemed to vibrate. He and another little boy had stood and talked in high, quick tones, bragging and predicting breathlessly the result of the battle as they used the term "our men."

Finally they climbed the tallest oak on the lawn, and strained their young eyes to see which was "gettin' whipped."

A little while after this he remembered following his father through the long hospital ward. Over the first bed he saw him stoop and loosen the white cotton bandages of a wounded man. On the next narrow cot there was a slender boy of fifteen, who lay with clenched hands watching the work of the surgeon. Then they passed a woman, who was gently bathing the forehead of a man whose soldier days seemed likely to come to an early end.

Some weeks had gone by, when one day he followed a party of men to Marye's Heights. It was a short time after the battle of Fredericksburg. A light snow had fallen the night before, which the wind whirled and sifted about the dead, in a way that made them appear to be shuddering. Once a sharp gust blew the snow off a body lying on its face, and the boy's eyes filled. He scarcely heeded the talk of the men with whom he had gone. His thoughts were held fast by the awful scene which lay spread before his young eyes.

How often since then had the boy pictured himself a grown man, seated on just such a fine horse and following Lee! It was always Lee; in his dreamland through the heart of the battle he always followed General Robert E. Lee, his hero, whom he had never seen, but whom he had carried halo-crowned in his heart ever since he could remember.

And then the very saddest day in his life had come—the day when the first news of Lee's surrender lay heavy on the hearts of the household. For a while he had followed his mother as she went silently, with closed white lips, from one duty to another. Finally he went out to seek comfort from Uncle Jake, whom he found sitting with his back propped against the side of the corn-crib, drawing little quick puffs of smoke from his pipe.

"Uncle Jake," he said, "Lee 's just *had* to s'render."

"Yes, honey, I done heahud 'bout hit." And as he looked into Uncle Jake's little red, watery eyes, he saw no comfort there, and turned away. Then Uncle Jake said very tenderly: "Nuvvuh you min', son; ef you had be'n uh grow'd-up man you 'd uh whipped um sho! Unc' Jake gwine tuh tek you possum-huntin' Sa'd'y night."

Seven months had gone by since the war had ended; still, on this October afternoon, as the boy lay stretched out on the porch of the old inn, he dreamed his boyish dreams of romance and heroism.

Suddenly his attention was attracted by the sound of hoofs, and turning his head he saw a man riding slowly down the road. A new arrival at the inn was always most interesting. An eager light came into the boy's eyes as he watched the rider, who was now near enough for him to see how firmly he sat in his saddle. The man seemed a very part of the strongly built horse, which carried him with an ease that indicated long habit.

A wiry little negro had also seen the approaching horseman, and was now hurrying across the lawn to meet him.

"May I spend the night here, my man?" asked the stranger.

"Yessuh—yessuh!" answered Uncle Jake, quickly, and opening the gate he stepped out and caught the bridle near the bit, as the horseman swung out of the creaking saddle to the ground.

"Uncle Jake, take the horse around to the stable!" called out the boy, who felt that the honors of hospitality rested on him, there being no one else in sight. Then he ran briskly down the walk to meet the stranger, who extended his fine, strong hand with a little smile, and said very kindly:

"How do you do, sir?"

"I 'm well," replied the boy.

"And what is your name?"

"Jimmy."

"Jimmy? Well, Jimmy is a nice name," he said. Then he turned, and still held the boy's hand as he watched the little old negro, who stood with his head under the saddle-skirt,

tiptoeing and straining in his effort to unfasten the girth. Finally, when he succeeded, he flung the saddle on the ground, and the horse, feeling relieved of his burden, first shook him-

his small brown hand slowly out of the stranger's gentle clasp.

After slipping off the bridle from the horse's head and dropping it by the saddle, Uncle Jake



"'YOU REMEMBER WHEN LEE JUST HAD TO S'RENDER?' ASKED JIMMY." (SEE NEXT PAGE.)

self violently, and then expressed his comfort again and again in deep chest-tones.

During all this time Jimmy's eyes had been fastened on the stranger's spurs, and a peculiar feeling of incredulity gradually filled his mind.

Silver, indeed! He could not fool him! No one was rich enough to have real silver spurs! So sternly did he resent what he thought to be an attempt at deception that he drew

led him away by his forelock to the stable, and Jimmy walked toward the inn with his guest, who said as they reached the steps:

"Jimmy, we will sit here for a while, and then I will go over to the stable and see about my horse."

As they sat down the old hound came cautiously down the steps, wheezing out a husky greeting.

"She is too old to hurt any one," said Jimmy.

"Is she yours?"

"No, sir. Tip's mine. Listen!" he exclaimed, as the sharp yelp of a dog again broke the stillness. "That's Tip! He goes off and runs rabbits all by himself."

"Perhaps he is after a fox."

"No, sir; Tip won't run a fox."

"Jimmy, can you tell from a dog's cry whether he is running a fox or a rabbit?"

"No, sir."

"Well, if he is trailing a rabbit he does not bark continually, but if he is after a fox he does; so you can always tell if you listen carefully."

"Never heard about that before," replied Jimmy, with a smile.

After this there followed a long pause, during which the stranger looked about inquiringly, then said:

"Jimmy, how long have you been living here?"

"Not very long. We refuged over in North Carolina the first part of the war. Then we came back to Spottsylvania County while father was in prison. Why, we just came here after the s'render. You remember when Lee just had to s'render?" he asked, looking up into the stranger's face.

The boy's mouth, as usual, quivered as he uttered the word "s'render," but the man did not appear to see this. He seemed to be looking at a far-off mountain peak. After a pause he replied, "Yes, I remember," as he arose and started toward the stable.

"I'll show you the way," said Jimmy.

"Thank you, sir," he answered gravely.

When they entered the stable the big gray horse greeted his master with some soft little nickerings. "Oh, he knows you without even looking!" exclaimed Jimmy, in tones expressing delight and surprise.

"Yes, he knows me pretty well," the man replied, as he looked with anxious sympathy at a saddle-galled place on the horse's back.

Jimmy had climbed up on the side of the stall, and was also looking with much interest. Suddenly he exclaimed: "I know what's good for that! Some stuff down in the bottom of the chalybeate spring."

He pronounced each syllable of the word

"chalybeate" very clearly, for it was a newly learned word, and he was proud of his ability to use it.

"Why, yes; the iron in it ought to be healing. How far is the spring?"

"Oh, just a little way; I'll show you," Jimmy replied, jumping to the ground and quickly opening the stable door. "Let me lead him," he added.

"Had n't you rather ride him, Jimmy?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, in rather shy but pleased tones.

"All right," said the man, as he swung the little fellow up on the horse. "There! Sit farther back, so you will not hurt that galled place. Now I'll lead him, and you tell me in which direction to go."

"Down the road there, just on the other side of the ice-pond," said Jimmy, pointing in that direction as they moved off.

The boy was happy as he cupped his bare legs close around the body of the horse, and watched the square shoulders of the man who walked slowly ahead. He thought him exceedingly nice and kind, and his feelings in regard to the spurs were not nearly so intense. The desire to ask if they were real silver, though, was strong, but he felt that perhaps it would not be polite, so he said nothing.

After they had gone some distance Jimmy exclaimed, "There's the spring!" Then he slid quickly to the ground, and without other words knelt down and, baring one arm, dipped out of the bottom of the spring a handful of rust-colored flakes.

"This is what you put on his back," he said. "Just lay it right on. It does n't hurt; it just feels cool."

The directions were quietly obeyed, and the horse made no movement, save a slight quiver of the skin, as if to shake off a fly.

"Uncle Jake says that doctors can't make any finer medicine than this," he said, as he scooped up another handful.

"Well, Jimmy, I am very much obliged to you, and I'm sure that my horse is also," said the stranger, as they started on back to the stable.

In the meantime the saddle left by Uncle Jake near the horse-rack had attracted the

attention of a young man as he came through the front gate. After looking at it for a few minutes, idle curiosity prompted him to turn it over with his foot, and as he did so three bright brass letters—"R. E. L."—greeted him. He looked sharply at them at first, then his eyes dilated, and a little prickly thrill ran through him. "I wonder if it can be!" he said. Suddenly some convincing feeling seemed to fill his mind, and then he almost ran to the house. On reaching the steps, he sprang up them two at a time, and entered the hall, where he met Mrs. Claverly.

"Mrs. Claverly—" he began, and stopped.

"Well?" she asked, smiling at his hesitation. "What is it, Charley?"

"Ah, do you know, Mrs. Claverly, I think that General Lee is here." His voice was husky with excitement.

"General Lee! Where?" But without waiting for a reply, she stepped quickly to the door of the old-fashioned parlor, and exclaimed in soft, suppressed tones to a group of women sitting there:

"They think that General Lee is here!"

"What makes them think so?" asked a thin, gray-haired woman, as she hastily arose.

"Why," replied the young man, his tones now quite positive, "his saddle with 'R. E. L.' on it is out there by the gate."

"There he comes now," said one of the group, eagerly; "at least, I suppose that it is he."

"Let me see," said Mrs. Claverly, going rapidly to the window. "I saw him once at the Greenbrier White, and I am sure that I would know him. Yes, it is he!" she exclaimed, as she looked at the man coming slowly across the lawn, talking earnestly to the barefoot boy at his side. His thoughts were so completely occupied by what he was saying that not until he was quite near the inn did he see the group on the porch, and his face flushed slightly as he realized that they were there to greet him. Lifting his hat, he ascended the steps with bared head. Mrs. Claverly walked quickly forward, and extended her slim white hand.

"General Lee, I believe."

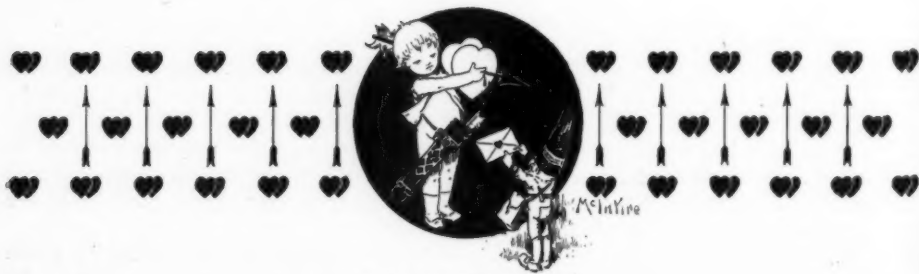
"Yes, madam," he replied gravely, as he bowed low over her hand.

At the sound of Lee's name Jimmy's eyes grew round, and filled with astonishment. For one brief moment he stood gazing up at the stately old soldier, whom every one was greeting, then he backed slowly away until he reached the door. There he stood another moment, seeing nothing but his hero.

Suddenly he turned and darted down the long hall, up the stairway, and into his mother's room.

"Mother!" he exclaimed in breathless wonderment, "mother! General Lee is downstairs, and he is just splendid, and—er—mother, he's just exactly like anybody else!" *

* This story is based upon the personal experience of one who related it to the author.



CUPID AND THE GNOMES' POSTMAN.

A FAVORITE BIRTH-YEAR.

By JOSEPH B. GILDER.

IT has been remarked that Mr. Hobart is the fourth Vice-President of the United States who has died in the month of November. His death occurred on the 21st (1899); Henry Wilson died on the 22d (1875); Elbridge T. Gerry—who gave his name to the still popular political trick of gerrymandering—on the 23d (1814); and Thomas A. Hendricks on the 25th (1885). The fact is of no significance whatever; yet, now that attention has been called to it, future Vice-Presidents will perhaps eat their Thanksgiving dinners with a peculiar satisfaction when the holiday falls, as in 1899, on the last day of the month.

A still more striking coincidence has been familiar for the past three quarters of a century to readers of American history. This was the death on the same day—and that day the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence—of the second and third Presidents of the American Republic, both of them signers of the Declaration, and one of them its author. The passing away of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson (the former at ninety-one and the latter at eighty-three) at an interval of a few hours, on July 4, 1826, was sufficiently remarkable to suggest purpose at least, if not agreement, on the part of these old friends. It is a coincidence perhaps unmatched in history.

Against November as, so to speak, a favorite death-month of American Vice-Presidents, February may be set off as a favorite birth-month of American and other men of genius—most notably George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, whose birthdays bring two national holidays almost as close together as Christmas and New Year's Day. On February 3, 1900, Felix Mendelssohn would be ninety-one years of age; on the 8th John Ruskin celebrates the eighty-first anniversary of his birth, and Jules Verne the seventy-second. Lincoln, Charles Darwin, and James Russell

Lowell were, all three, born on the 12th (Lowell would be eighty-one had he lived). On the next day Lord Salisbury will enter upon his seventy-first year; on the 14th Ernest Legouvé rounds out his ninety-third; and on the 15th Dr. Weir Mitchell completes his seventy-first, with mental force still unabated. Had February the same allowance of days as even the shorter of the other months, Frédéric Chopin could be added to our list; as it is, he misses it by the narrowest possible margin, his natal day having been March 1 (1809).

It was in the same year, as well as in the same month, that three of the names here mentioned were bestowed upon those who made them famous—Lincoln, Darwin, Mendelssohn. In this and the other months of 1809 occurred perhaps the greatest number of illustrious births that can be credited to any single year of the century now hastening to its close. In America we have Lincoln, Edgar Allan Poe, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes; in England, Lord Tennyson, Mr. Gladstone, Professor Darwin, Lord Houghton, Professor John Stuart Blackie, Edward Fitzgerald, and Mrs. Mary Cowden Clarke; in Germany, Mendelssohn; and in Poland, Chopin.

A further coincidence is to be noted in the life-term of two of the most brilliant lights in this meteoric shower. The American poet of night-fancies and day-dreams, and the Polish tone-poet of nocturnes and études, were born within ten weeks of each other, and died but ten days apart, Poe's birth having occurred on January 19, 1809, and Chopin's death on October 17, 1849, just nine days after the author of "The Raven" was laid at rest in the Baltimore churchyard, where, for half a century, his grave has been cared for by the man that dug it. A suggestive comparison might be made, between the lives and genius of these two unhappy spirits of the early half of the nineteenth century.

THE DREAM OF "ROGET."

(A Tautological Tale.)

BY GRACE FRASER.



MOST of you have seen Dr. Roget's "Thesaurus of English Words," the standard reference-book. Now this "thesaurus" (which word means "treasury") is a system of verbal classification. You take all the words and phrases that mean pretty much the same thing, range them in a row, make these rows into sections, call the sections by appropriate names, and—there you are!

Falling asleep, one night, over Roget's curious book, I dreamed that I was Roget himself, and a very fat man into the bargain. A gentleman behind me was admonishing me to hasten, with the words:

"Come, come, my good fellow, bowl, trundle, roll along!"

"H'm," thought I, "what it is to be stout! Quoting my very words, is he? I'll show him!" And turning, I exclaimed:

"Go! begone! get you gone! get away! go along! be off! off with you! get along with you! go about your business! go your way! avaunt! aroynt! away with you!"

"Whew!" cried the saucy man. "What an irascible, susceptible, excitable, irritable, fretful, fidgety, peevish, hasty, quick, warm, hot, touchy, testy, pettish, waspish, snappish, petulant, peppery, fiery, passionate, choleric fellow it is!"

This annoyed me.

"Sir," I said, "you shall not ridicule, deride, laugh at, mock, quiz, rally, flout, twit, roast,

taunt, or make game of me; this is ill treatment, annoyance, molestation, abuse, oppression, persecution, outrage, of a kind that I shall not stand!"

The man apparently wanted to fight, for he continued meditatively: "What a corpulent, stout, fat, plump, chubby, chub-faced, lubberly, hulky, unwieldy—"

This was more than flesh and blood could stand. I tried to chastise him, but he turned into a policeman, took me to the station, and accused me before a judge of attempting "by tooth and nail, *vi et armis*, at the point of the sword, and at one fell swoop, to be violent, to run high, ferment, effervesce, run wild, run riot, to break the peace, to out-herod Herod, and to run amuck."

I denied the charge with vigor. "It is false, untrue, unfounded, fictitious, invented, *ben trovato*, counterfeit, spurious!" I cried. "The policeman is a hypocrite, tale-teller, shuffler, dissembler, serpent, and Baron Munchausen. I am innocent, stainless, unspotted, inoffensive, dove-like, lamb-like, with clean hands and with a clear conscience. I demand atonement, reparation, compensation, propitiation, amends, and satisfaction."

"Take them all, Mr. Roget," said the judge; and I was going for the policeman when I awoke. And so the conversation, which could hardly be called a model of conciseness, brevity, terseness, compression, condensation, or pithiness, came to a close, termination, conclusion, *finis, finale*, finish, determination, and end.

HER WINTER ROSES.

THEY bloom and glow in the frosty air,
They thrive in the driving storm;
But they droop and fade if kept too long
Where the air is soft and warm.

On two round cheeks her roses grow,
When the wind is fresh and cold;
And roses so sweet and red, I know,
Never were bought or sold.

Gussie Packard Du Bois.

JOSEY AND THE CHIPMUNK.

BY SYDNEY REID.

[This story was begun in the November number.]

CHAPTER IX.

THE NERVOUS ELEPHANT.

THE next morning, when Josey awoke, she found the elephant waiting to speak to her.

"Now, what was that?" he asked her.

"What?" asked Josey.

"That thing that gave out such a noise. The thing that went bang!"

"That was a giant-cracker. It did n't hurt you. I warned you that it would n't hurt you."

"Yes; but how was I to remember that when I was so frightened?"

"But you know now that it did n't hurt you," said Josey, laughing at the nervousness of the big, strong creature.

"I don't know whether it did or not. You might look at my legs and see if they are all on me yet. See if I have all my ears, too."

Josey looked the elephant over, and told him that there was nothing wrong with him.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" he said. "I have not had such a fright since the last time that I met a mouse!"

"Are you afraid of mice?" asked Josey.

"Am I? Of course I am! All elephants are. They're such crawly creatures!"

"I'm sure they're not so crawly as spiders," said Josey.

"Oh, they're worse," said the elephant. "At least, they always seem to me to be much worse. But that thing you had last night — it

was just as bad. It frightened me so much that I never slept one wink. I don't know how long I was trying to climb a tree before I found out just what I was doing. Then, when I found I was alone, I was so frightened that I ran back here, and I've been standing ever since by your side, so that, if a mouse came, I could wake you up

and have you fight him, and drive him away from me. They are frightful little creatures."

"Why," said the chipmunk, "I'd like to see any mouse try any tricks with us! I'd soon show him where he belonged!"

"That's good," said the elephant, with a deep sigh of relief.

"You carry us where we are going, and we will see that you are protected," continued the chipmunk.

"Where are you going?"



"AND AWAY THEY WENT!" (SEE NEXT PAGE.)

"We're going to see the dogs," said Josey.

The elephant pulled a great bunch of grass and put it on his head between his ears. Then he put his trunk round the little girl's waist and swung her up, and away they went at a good fast pace that took them out of the oasis and over the rolling sand. That night they camped near a river, and Josey slept soundly until morning. She was awakened by a squabble between the elephant and the chipmunk. The chipmunk said the elephant snored and kept him awake. The elephant replied, as a joke, that the chipmunk had nothing to do with what was in another animal's trunk.

"Don't be impudent to your betters," said the chipmunk, "or you may meet the fate of Miss Chatty Friske."

"Oh, what was her fate?" asked Josey, very eagerly. "You never told me about her."

The chipmunk then began :

MISS CHATTY FRISKE.

"The family to which I belong is a very old one, and much honored in our woods. It is true that sometimes the farmers' boys throw



"THAT GAVE HER HYSTERICS."

sticks and stones at us ; but it is their ignorance of our importance in the county that makes them do that, or perhaps sometimes they are jealous of our good looks and the attention we win. With the exception of the farmers' boys, we are very much respected, having lived in

the same tree for a long time. I believe it was my great-great-great-great-grandfather who first made his home there; and when I came into



"WATCH ME NOW!"

the family my people lived higher than any others in the whole woods.

"Because they lived so very high, all others looked up to them, and they were known far and wide as the great people of the place. They used to say that they owned all the land about ; but they let the farmer work on it because he liked to work.

"We were a very happy family till my aunt came to live with us, and brought her only daughter, Miss Chatty Friske. Miss Chatty used to try to be smart, and thought she was clever when she was only impudent. She plagued the people who passed along the road, till a man actually brought a gun, one day, and tried to shoot her. That gave her hysterics, and when she got over them she had us all flying about getting medicine for her.

"Our next-door neighbors were the bees, who lived in the next knot-hole below. Miss Chatty thought it was great fun to steal honey from them, and upset their house. The bees were very angry ; and one old fellow, who had suffered from her jokes several times, resolved to see if he could not revenge himself in some way.

"You should not stay in such a slow old place as this is," he said. "There is nobody here to understand and admire one so witty."

"That is quite true," said Miss Chatty. "This is a slow old poky place, and such a superior person as myself is not understood."

"You should show off your smartness to the world. When you get the idea for something witty you should go round first and call the attention of people to what you are about to do, and then they will all applaud and wonder at your wit," said the bee.

"Miss Chatty said that she thought the advice very good. 'Can't you think of something clever now?' she asked.

"Well, there are those people who live in that big paper house over there," said the old bee. "They would be good ones to play a joke on—but they are very sharp, and perhaps you had better begin on some others who are not quite so sharp. But then you'll know best."

"But Miss Chatty was the more determined to go and play some trick upon them that would make the whole world wonder at her.

"So she called out all her family. 'Stand here,' she said; 'there's going to be some fun soon.'

"Yes," said the old bee, looking up at the chipmunks; "there's going to be some great fun soon!"

"Miss Chatty ran briskly about through the woods and knocked at every one's door. 'Come out!' she cried. 'Come out and see the fun that is going to happen!'

"Then the creatures sat around waiting for the fun to begin.

"When Miss Chatty

had made all her arrangements, she went out on the grass and smiled and bowed right and left to everybody. Then she ran up the tree where the big paper house was hanging.

"Watch me now!" she said, and made a jump.

"She struck the paper house fair in the middle, and went through it without stopping at all. She knocked all the babies out of their cradles and tore things inside to bits, and she lit on the ground smiling, and bowed right and left again. Then she stood there, waiting to hear the applause.

"Now, it so happened that the paper house belonged to people called Wasps. They were people who minded their own business, but were great fighters when any one made them angry. They were furious now, when they saw that their house had been torn to pieces. They flew at Miss Chatty and stung her.

"Her mother came out and threatened them,



THE SULTAN OFFERS ACHMET A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE BICYCLE.
(SEE NEXT PAGE.)

and some of them lit on her and made her fly like mad.

"At last Miss Chatty made a desperate spring and flew off up the road. The wasps chased her and her mother till they were driven away from the woods. They never came back, and everybody was glad."

"Now it is your turn to tell a story," said Josey to the elephant. Tell us the most wonderful story you ever heard."

"But the most wonderful story that I heard was not true," said the elephant. "The man who told it is being punished for his falsehoods at this very moment. Every day he is made to sit on the steps of the palace with a sign upon him which says: THIS IS AHMET THE UNTRUTHFUL!"

"Never mind about that," said Josey. "Tell us the story, and we will judge of the untruthfulness ourselves."

And so the elephant told his story like this:

AHMET THE UNTRUTHFUL.

"On the day when the king gave a great feast there came before him all the men who tell marvelous but true tales. He heard from them about the roc, biggest of all birds, that can shadow a whole city with its wings, and of the serpents that are larger than the greatest trees, and of the lodestone mountain that is in the midst of the sea, and that draws the nails out of the ships so that they all fall to pieces when they go too near it; of the magic carpet that traveled to Persia and back in the time of wishing; of the flying horse; and of men turned to animals and animals turned to men.

"Then came one who said: 'O Sultan, may thy dog of a servant's servant speak and live? There is a certain man just arrived from the land of the *giaours** who tells of marvels seen there more wonderful than these.'

"Let him be brought," said the Sultan.

"And when the man was come he stood before the Sultan, saying: 'O Protector of the Faithful, may thy dog of a servant's servant speak and live? I am no teller of marvelous

tales. What I have said about the country of the *giaours* is even so — what I have seen with mine own eyes and heard with mine own ears. Thy dog of a servant's servant speaks nothing but the truth.'

"Now the Sultan smiled through his black beard and played with his jeweled simitar.

"Let us hear this marvelous truth," he said.

"Then he who had been in the land of the *giaours* stood out and spoke boldly:

"Know, Most Potent Lord," he said, "that the country of the *giaours* is very far across the great waters. Thy dog of a servant's servant, having a mind to travel, set out from these parts three years ago with merchandise and camels, and came, after many weeks, to the city which is on the shores of the sea. There he sold his goods for a profit, and rested at the house of a pious old man who knows many things. From him he heard of the floating city on which the *giaours* travel from place to place, and having made certain disposal of his property, he found the floating city even as it had been said. In length it was almost as great as the wall of the palace; the people upon it were men, women, and children, all having houses in the streets of the city. There were shops, also, like those of the barber and the bath-keeper, and great halls where the people sat at tables to eat, or listened to music.

"And soon after I had gone in it a bell rang, and the city left the shore and went across the sea more swiftly than the fastest of horses."

"At this point there were murmurings among the dervishes, and the Sultan spoke:

"Did the floating city go faster than the fastest of my horses?"

"The traveler answered: 'It is even so, Commander of the Faithful; thy servant tells nothing but the truth.'

"Of what were the sails?"

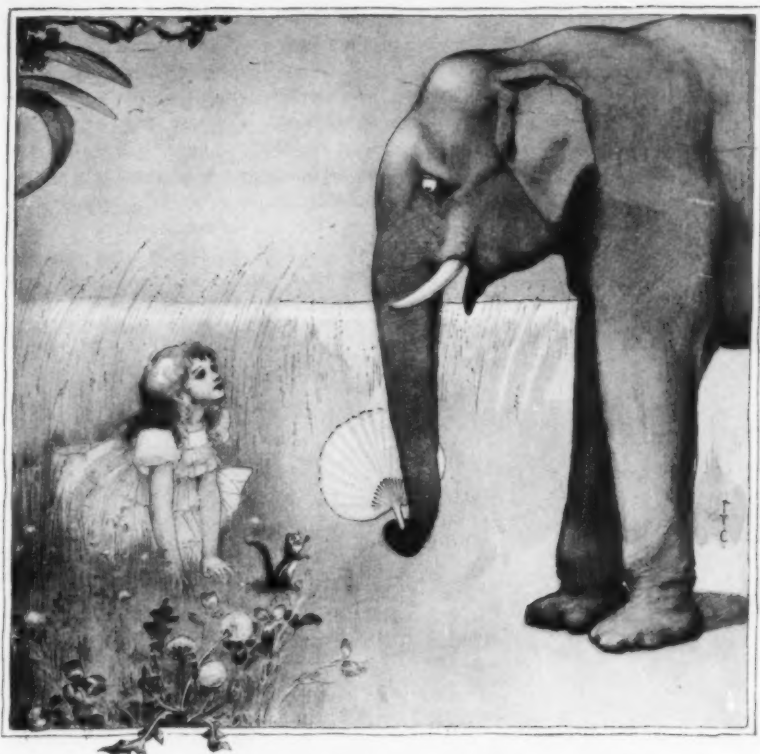
"O Lord of the Earth, there were no sails!"

"Perhaps a great roc moved the city," said the Grand Vizier.

"The greatest of rocs could not have moved it," replied the traveler.

"The *giaours* must have monsters of the sea that obey them," said the Sultan.

* Pronounced "jower"; a word meaning "infidel" in Turkish, and once applied to those nations who were not Mohammedans.



"WHAT THE POOR MAN TOLD WAS TRUE," SAID JOSEY." (SEE PAGE 339.)

"If the tongue of thy servant may utter the truth and not wither, no monsters of the sea helped the giaours," said the traveler. "They had instead a marvelous genie called steam, in an iron prison under the city. The noise of his working could be heard almost a day's journey. He breathed fire and black smoke, and his voice was louder than the roaring of a thousand lions. He beat the water with fins like those of a great fish, and made the city to go against wind and waves."

"Against the wind?" asked the Sultan.

"It is the truth," said the traveler. "We came at last to the land of the giaours, at a place where there are many cities, all larger than ours. These giaours have no Sultan, but all work, men and women, running about as if they had lost a piece of silver. And those who want to go upon a journey get into houses on wheels that are in the streets; and these go very fast, though

there is no one to pull or push them. They go far faster than camels or horses. The giaours say that this is the work of a great genie who is brother of the lightning. And some of the houses of that city are so high that a man looking down from the roof sees those in the streets as though they were ants; and men get to the roof and down again by means of a room that moves very swiftly from the top to the bottom."

"The murmuring of the dervishes was now loud, but the Sultan stilled them with a wave of his hand.

"Go on," he said to the traveler.

"In the country of the giaours," he said, "they make the sun take pictures."

"The Sultan laughed, but the Grand Vizier and the dervishes were angry.

"Does the sun indeed come down for the giaours, and does he make pictures for them?" asked the Sultan, looking very severe.

"Every day, in a thousand cities. He can make ten pictures in one place while the Commander of the Faithful breathes once."

"The Sultan folded his legs under him more tightly, and clenched his hand on the hilt of his simitar; but he answered only:

"Go on!"

"The giaours have boxes which talk and sing. Speak to one of these boxes, and go away and come again a month or a year after, and it will call to you the words you said, having forgotten

"It went a day's journey every hour for the space of a moon's age."

"Then the Sultan said: 'O wicked man, what hath made thee bold to tell such things to the Commander of the Faithful? Knowest thou not that the earth is flat, and thy floating city would come to the end of it and drop over the edge in ten days!'

"And he commanded two wheels to be brought, and set one in front and one behind, after the manner of those ridden by the giaour



JOSEY, THE CHIPMUNK, AND THE ELEPHANT ARE ENTERTAINED BY THE ST. BERNARDS.

nothing, not even the tone. Some of these boxes speak the words and sing in the voices of men who have long been dead.

"Every day a book tells all that has happened during the day in all the earth, and it is sold in the streets. In this country there is no Sultan; but the people, every fourth year, choose a ruler. And the women there go in the streets with bare faces; and some of them wear trousers like those of the faithful, and they sit upon two wheels that are fastened one before the other, and they go faster than the fastest horse."

"How fast did the floating city go?" asked the Sultan, as the traveler paused.

women with bare faces and trousers like those of the faithful.

"Here are the wheels," he said to the traveler. "Now you must sit upon them and go faster than the fastest horse."

"But the traveler could not sit upon the wheels. And the face of the Sultan grew black as the blackest thunder-cloud, and he said: 'Confess that thou hast lied!'

"Then the Sultan made a sign, and the slaves seized the traveler and beat him with the bastinado; and the demon that was in him departed, and he came to himself and cried aloud:

"O Commander of the Faithful, it was a

lying dream that I told to thee. I know nothing of the giaours or their land. Forgive thy servant, and grant that he may live."

"Then the Sultan ordered the man unbound; and they put the sign upon him: THIS IS AH-MET THE UNTRUTHFUL. And they make him sit on the palace steps from dawn till evening, as a warning to all men."

When the elephant had finished his story, Josey opened her eyes very wide.

"Do you mean that the poor man is sitting there now with that sign on his neck?" she asked.

"Quite likely," said the elephant. "They keep him there as a warning to travelers."

"I don't know what they mean by giaours," said Josey; "but we have all those wonderful things that the traveler found, in the very country that I came from. What the poor man told was true."

"You don't say so!" said the elephant, very much surprised. "Then we must leave here immediately, and as soon as possible I must go and tell the Sultan to set poor Ahmet free."

So, leaving their camp in the warm country, Josey and the elephant and the chipmunk traveled and traveled and journeyed and journeyed until they came to some lofty mountains.

They climbed up and up and up the mountains, higher and higher, till they were in a land of beautiful snow and ice. Here they saw a great house, and when they came to it they heard big dogs barking. Some of the dogs came to the door and let them in. The biggest dogs in the world were there, walking about like soldiers, with bottles on their necks and blankets strapped on their backs, as if going out for a long journey in the snow.

Little Josey asked one of the old ones that sat by the fire what these big, strong dogs were going to do, and he told her that they were going out on the mountains to find the travelers who were freezing to death and bring them in.

"Do they truly do that?" asked Josey.

"Why, of course," said the old dog. "Everybody knows about the St. Bernard dogs.

People could not cross the mountains at all if it were not for us."

The dogs made them comfortable for the night, and they slept soundly after their climb.

The next day the elephant, who was not used to snow, had a bad cold, and his coughing was so loud that the dogs said it would not do for them to go out on the mountain again, as his coughing and sneezing would certainly shake down one of the avalanches that were hanging away high up in the sky.

They put the elephant into their biggest chair, and gave him gruel, and put his feet in hot water, and wrapped red flannel about his neck. Soon he stopped coughing, and said that he felt quite comfortable.

The dogs, who had never seen a chipmunk before, were greatly interested in him, and asked him many questions about the country that he came from. They wanted to know all about his relatives, too, and whether they were as small as himself.

"Small as I?" asked the chipmunk, in astonishment. "Why, I never knew that I was small. I think I'm pretty nearly as tall as yourself."

Then he stood on the floor beside the big dog, and tried to stretch himself to Nero's height. The other dogs laughed.

The chipmunk was angry because of what the big dog had said about his size, and at first wished to fight; but the dogs were too good-natured to quarrel, and said they did not mean to hurt his feelings. So after brushing his whiskers out as far as they would go, and stretching himself up to his full height, the chipmunk said:

"If Nero will apologize to me, and own that I am quite as big as he is, I will forgive him."

"I am willing to own that you feel quite as big," said Nero.

The chipmunk thoughtfully brushed his tail out with his paws, and finally said: "That will do. It seems to me to be the same thing."

This restored harmony, and they remained with the dogs until the next day, hearing stories about the rescue of travelers lost in the snow.

(To be continued.)



ELENA'S CAPTIVE

by CAROLINE DALE PARKE.

(Though complete in itself, this story is a sequel to that published under the same title in the December number.)

THE Count of Cabra paced impatiently in front of his tent. Now in absent fashion he pulled his sword half-way from its scabbard and sent it back with a clang; now he looked for a moment at the dainty city of Granada that stood so temptingly in front of the Christian camp.

This afternoon Queen Isabella was to arrive, and the count awaited the summons to go out with the band of knights to meet her. This was hardly cause for impatience. But the Count of Cabra was not thinking of his gracious queen or of the royal reception, but of a small, black-eyed girl who had kissed him goodbye in his castle at Vaena five years ago. Since then the war had occupied him wholly.

One by one the strongholds of the Moors had fallen into Christian hands, and at length King Ferdinand had set himself down before the very gates of Granada. Ferdinand was a very determined man, so when the camp was completed he sent for the queen to come and live there, meaning thus to show the Moors that he intended to stay until he had starved them in the walls of their city.

Then it was that the queen sent word to the Count of Cabra inviting his daughter to be of

the royal retinue. The count could scarcely realize that his little girl, who had always lived so quietly in his mountain castle, was now to take part in the exciting life of the camp; and, more than this, that he should see again those dark, mischievous eyes, and feel the persuading touch of her soft round cheek against his.

The sound of a trumpet announced the approach of the queen. The count quickly mounted his horse, and swept into the bright company of knights who, with the king at their head, went to meet her. As the queen passed, the long line of standards saluted her in a gorgeous undulation, as if a great wave had appeared in the plain and plashed against her feet, all gold and yellow and red. Isabella received the homage with that winning gentleness that made her so dear to her people, and, turning toward the king, made three deep bows. These the king returned slowly, and then, riding nearer, embraced her, while the people looked on as if awe-struck at this royal meeting.

When the ceremony was at an end and the grave silence of the multitude broke up in happy greetings and laughter, the count looked hither and yon for the round face with mischievous black eyes. He heard two knights behind him discussing the Spanish ladies in low tones.

"And see the young maiden on the white mule with silver trappings," said one. "In a few years she will be a worshipful lady."

The Count of Cabra looked, and decided that she was worshipful already. She had taken off her broad-brimmed hat to get the breeze against her pretty forehead, from which the hair was blowing back in a clear arch above her brows. Suddenly she caught sight of the count, and dropped her rein, while the most enchanting smile rippled from her eyes to her mouth and across her dimpling cheeks. Could it be? Yes, there was Margian riding near and watching her. The count rode over and gave the "worshipful lady" two delighted kisses, while he peeped out of the corner of his eye to see if the knights had noticed that *this* was the daughter of the Count of Cabra. He watched her proudly as she rode into camp. Everything was new to her, and her eyes were constantly sparkling with gladness. And no wonder; for the camp was not the ordinary collection of white tents, but a little city of silk, where dainty pavilions of blue, yellow, and rose-color stood on both sides of the straight, narrow streets. And all were so full of joy at the arrival of the queen that you heard nothing but shouts and music and laughter.

Elena had an apartment in the queen's pavilion, which was a great silken tent of purple surrounded by lower tents of scarlet. Her little room was made of linen, painted on the outside with pictures of knights and horses, and lined inside with soft azure silk, embroidered with golden stars.

Several days went by, and the life at the camp was as gay as if war were the pleasantest thing in the world. The only blot upon it for Elena was Margian's crossness. Poor Margian! no doubt she was very sad to be so near her native city of Granada, knowing that she could not enter. In the morning she looked weary, as if she had not slept; and at evening she hurried Elena into bed and did not even stop to say good night. Elena was very glad when, one afternoon, Margian came and sat near the door of the tent, looking her quiet self again. Granada lay shimmering in the sunshine on its two lofty hills.

"I wish it were nearer," Elena said, looking

at the city, "so we could see the gardens and the different houses."

"Let us go out and look at it closer," replied Margian, eagerly.

"But may we do that?"

"Yes, yes. I know a way."

They went past the soldiers' huts and by an unfrequented path to the open field. Margian led the way to a grassy spot by the river Darro, whose sands, she said, were filled with gold. Here the hills of Granada loomed up majestically, and from the rounded masses of green rose the towers of the Alhambra, as if guarding the huddled houses of the valley.

Elena gazed with rapt delight. "Oh, Margian, art thou not glad we came?" she cried.

Margian did not answer, but looked behind her quickly as the muffled sound of hoofs on the soft turf came to them. She took off the lace veil from her head, and waved it three times vigorously. In a moment a Moor appeared on horseback, leading a donkey he had evidently stolen from the camp. Margian looked at him with such wide-open eyes that Elena thought at first she was frightened; but as he came nearer she met him, saying in low tones:

"They told me thou wouldst pass this way. Aben, brother, dost thou not know me?" And growing suddenly very white, she fell into his arms.

The Moor looked around cautiously, then, laying Margian on the grass, he suddenly picked up Elena, and set her, breathless, on the donkey, at the same time giving him a slap that sent him cantering along in the direction of Granada. In a moment more the Moor's horse came galloping, and passed Elena, who saw the Moor with his fluttering garments, and Margian riding behind him with her arms around his waist.

"Oh, Margian, Margian!" cried Elena, tearfully.

The man bade her be silent so angrily that she dared not speak again, but sat in a little frightened heap on the jolting donkey. Now and then she looked up fearfully from his long, bobbing ears to the form of the man before her. She longed to turn back, but the idea of that terrible Moor chasing her down the highway was too much for

her to bear. Still, she let the donkey walk along more and more slowly. Now the road was bordered on either side by high stone walls, over which peeped the branches of olives and citrons; and far ahead she saw a large oak-tree, where the road divided, one path leading toward the hill, and the other losing itself in the valley.

A thought flashed across her mind so suddenly that she sat bolt upright in her saddle; and the donkey pricked up his unwieldy ears as if to ask, "Did you say anything just now?"

What if she could take a different road from the Moor, and perhaps hide and escape him? She watched keenly, and at last saw him turn toward the valley; then, with her heart standing still in her breast, she went up the hilly lane. When the wall and bushes hid her, she kicked the fuzzy brown sides of the donkey so vigorously that the small beast, feeling himself abused, suddenly planted his smooth round hoofs and refused to stir. She tried to urge him on with motions of her own body, with little slaps on his neck, with tears and pleadings, but to no avail; and at last, being quite desperate, she jumped down and ran as fast as her stiff brocade skirts would let her. Her hair slipped from its silver net, and fell in pretty confusion down on her shoulders. At last she came to a fountain where the water gushed through the wall into a round basin. It was surrounded with myrtle-trees and thick vines that made a cozy hiding-place. Elena stopped for one moment to fling the water on her hot face, and then slipped behind the thicket, crouching down with a sigh of thankfulness. A peasant girl passed with a basket of fruit, but after that the road was quite deserted. Even the twittering of the birds at the fountain's brink was lost. And finally her eyes grew dim and heavy, her dear little head drooped sideways on her shoulders, and leaning against the wall, she fell sound asleep.

She was roused by the sound of many voices and the tramping of hoofs. A party of Moorish soldiers had stopped to water their horses at the fountain. From where she crouched, Elena could see them in the water

quite plainly. One of the cavaliers was just leading his horse away, when it stopped and began to sniff the thicket as a hunting-dog might have done.

"Ah, Ramza, thou foolish child, come away," he said, pulling at the rein. But no sooner was the delicate head lifted than it was lowered again, and the silky nostrils came breathing almost in Elena's face.

"Well, darling, what is it?" asked the cavalier, as if he were talking to some loved child. "Is there an apple there thou wilt have?" He thrust his hand into the bush. Elena stooped so low as she could, holding her breath; but in spite of all she could do, his hand touched her head.

"Holy prophet! what have we here?" he cried, as he pushed aside the bushes and dragged out the trembling Elena before them all.

"Oh, let me go home—let me go back to my father!" she pleaded, trying to remember the Arabic Margian had taught her, and looking into his face like a startled deer. "Don't give me back to the Moor!"

"I shall not be in haste to give thee to anybody, fair lady," he answered, making her a deep bow.

Elena put her hands over her face and began to sob pitifully.

"How came she here?" asked one soldier of another. "A Spanish girl, and under our very walls! Perhaps a spy."

At this word a young Moor rode up closer, saying, "Thou hast taken a fair prisoner, Amar. I think from her looks she is of gentle birth, so we must treat her gallantly."

Elena looked up. He had very kind eyes that were wide apart and honest. His neck was brown and strong, and he held his head proudly, shaking it backward when he spoke. Surely she had seen that gesture before, and the eyes too, and that proud smile. Her lips parted with a quick-drawn breath.

"Reduan, Reduan!" she cried, clasping his large, cup-like stirrup in both hands. "I am Elena. Look at me—I am indeed!"

He leaped down from his horse in a trice, and knelt before her.

"Star of the Morning," he said, "thou shalt



"SURELY SHE HAD SEEN THAT GESTURE BEFORE, AND THE EYES TOO, AND THAT PROUD SMILE."

fear naught. I and my sword are with thee, by the grace of God."

The cavaliers stood back in astonishment, and Amar looked angry, until Reduan, standing up straight, pointed to a torn ribbon on his arm.

"It is my lady, for whose honor and Granada's I will fight and die."

The cavaliers murmured applause, and Reduan, stepping nearer, said to Amar:

"Let me pay thee the ransom for thy prisoner, O Amar."

"I will take naught from my friend," answered Amar, gallantly. "The lady is thine."

Then, full of joy, Reduan lifted her to his horse, and, mounting behind her, rode away, talking to her softly about his mother and Gulnare, to whom he would bring her, and making her ever gladder as they went along. The lane led through a towered gate that the keeper opened to let them into Granada. To Elena, whose life had been spent in the quiet of a mountain castle, the wilderness of houses and crowds of people were terrifying.

Presently the steed stepped out into the light of an open square. Here warriors gathered in knots and talked angrily; peasant girls in dark, rough tunics filled their pitchers at the fountain. The streets became more and more crowded as they neared the great bazaar, El Zacatin. Elena clung to the horse's neck, and did not breathe freely again until they began to mount the eastern hill toward the Alhambra. Here the street widened into an avenue bordered by magnificent shade-trees. Looking up, Elena caught glimpses of the high, forbidding towers of the palace fort, standing dull red against the deepening sky.

"Are we going there?" she asked, with a mixture of delight and awe.

"Yes," answered Reduan. "For many months my father hath resided there by the king's wish. It is well that he be near the king. And now my mother and my sisters, Gulnare and Equivila, are there also."

They soon arrived at the Gate of Justice, a square, solid tower, pierced by a tall, narrow doorway. Over the arch Elena saw a carved hand much like the amulet Reduan had given her long ago. Here they dismounted, passing under the arch and along the narrow walled

path to the doorway of the Alhambra. They entered, and lo! the confusion of the city was gone like a troubled dream, and they stood in a hushed fairy-land. Beneath their feet were the cool marble floors, high over their heads a wilderness of lovely forms and colors—leaves, vines, geometrical figures, all outlined in gold. A maze of delicate columns closed them in—columns of gold that gleamed softly in the light shed from a court beyond; columns of marble white and slender as the jets of a fountain, that seemed at the top to burst into many-colored spray, so delicate was the tracery of their capitals. They would have been too frail for the arches above had not those arches been carved until they were as light as lace.

Reduan led her through several apartments to an open court filled with the soft light of sunset. Moorish warriors in flowing white robes sat by the fountain, talking in low tones; the fountain, sending its "cloud of pearls" into the air, spoke louder than they. Four square stone beasts held the basin and seemed to be listening stolidly. Elena wondered at them as she passed out of the light and into the restful shadow of the court beyond. Here a rosy beam of the setting sun fell through a high, star-shaped window, and quivered over the floor in the delicate pattern of the trellis through which it came. Elena was almost persuaded that an invisible spirit was weaving a lace of sunbeams, and dancing as it worked. Now a vista of arches stretched away in the half-light, each arch different from its fellow, each crowned with arabesques in velvety purples, dusky yellows, and gold. The dainty curves were softened by ornaments that hung down like tropical moss, and made the whole seem ready to float away. And there where the arches diminished to the smallness of a bird were two windows whose tracery seemed to embroider the blue sky beyond.

Elena trembled and her eyes filled with tears. "Oh, it is so beautiful, so beautiful!" she whispered; and Reduan whispered back, "Now we are just beneath paradise."

"Come, now," said Reduan, at last; "I must bring thee to my mother."

He turned into a small room, and drew

aside a curtain. Elena saw a woman, white-haired, but slender and lovely, lying on a couch that was just a niche in the wall piled

has been my good fortune to find and bring thee a daughter."

The mother rose with Reduan's own smile



"THEY GALLOPED FOR SOME TIME IN SILENCE." (SEE NEXT PAGE.)

high with embroidered cushions. Near the latticed window stood a girl about her own age, draped in a robe of thin silk confined at the waist by a loose girdle. She held a nightingale on her finger, and the soft, interrupted notes of the bird were the only sounds.

"Mother," said Reduan, "this is Elena. It

in her eyes. "Art thou indeed our 'Star of the Morning,' of whom we have said so many beautiful things?"

She clasped Elena in her arms, and Gulnare, hurrying from the window, added her caresses. It was as if they had known her all her life.

"Thou art my daughter indeed," said the

mother, again and again, smoothing back Elena's hair and petting her as Elena had never been petted before.

Then Muza, Reduan's father, came, tall and grave, with shining eyes, and clad in white, as if he were the priest of his people. He seemed as overjoyed as the rest to see the little Spanish girl, and thought it was a good omen that Reduan had found her.

"Allah must be turning toward us again," he said, "since he lets us return the great kindness for which we are in thy debt these years."

Elena hung her head and blushed painfully. If he knew how near she had come to keeping Reduan a prisoner! But she dared not tell him; he was too great and fine—almost greater than her own dear father.

The next day at noon Gulnare took her to a large court she had not seen before. The walls were hung with heavy curtains, from behind which came the sound of lovely music, the loveliest Elena had ever heard. In the center was a long pool bordered with myrtle-trees, and in this several Moorish girls were splashing about merrily. Gulnare, after some time, persuaded Elena to lay aside her stiff brocades, and, hand in hand, they stepped into the deep, cool water. When Elena came out her own dress was gone, and in its stead was a striped silk robe like Gulnare's, with a costly girdle, and two heavy anklets.

"Sisters must be alike," said Gulnare, fondly, "and we could never give thee enough for thy gift of freedom to our Reduan."

"But I do not deserve that," stammered Elena; "I did not—"

"Thou didst a beautiful deed toward us—that is enough," said Gulnare, kissing her.

Elena was so happy she could have lived in this way forever had it not been for her father and his grief for her.

"I must go back," she said to Reduan. "My father might come within the very walls of Granada to find me, and so be killed."

"If thou goest, I go with thee, Star of the Morning," answered Reduan.

Thus it was that late one evening Elena and Reduan slipped cautiously out at the Gate of Justice. The tears were in Elena's eyes. It

was so hard to part from her new mother and sister! And they all seemed so afraid that Reduan might be killed before he could return. It was a daring deed to go into the enemy's camp; and he scorned to carry a flag of truce. They saw their path clearly by the starlight, and galloped for some time in silence. Then Elena reined her horse.

"Reduan, do not go farther," she pleaded. "See, the field is quite deserted. I shall be safe by myself."

"I would not let thee go alone—not for all the wealth of the Alhambra," was the stout answer.

They came at last to the outpost.

"Where is thy tent?" whispered Reduan, looking over the silken roofs.

"The high one in the midst with the large banner," answered Elena.

"Then come; we must be quick," he added; and gripping her bridle firmly, he gave a sharp command to his steed. They dashed into the camp, past the huts of the soldiers and up the main street, drawing rein in front of the queen's tent. Here Reduan lifted Elena from her horse, and with a soft "good-by" leaped into his saddle.

At this moment the guards ran out and caught at his bridle. Reduan defended himself gallantly, but Elena saw that he would soon be overpowered. Roused by the noise, several knights leaped up, grasped their swords, and ran out. Elena, like the brave little soldier girl she was, had flung herself into the midst of the fray and was calling to the guards to stop, when her father caught her arm.

"Elena!" he said. The exclamation was half a prayer of thankfulness. "What is this? Hold!"

His voice rose above the din, and the guards fell back from Reduan.

"He brought me back," came Elena's sweet, eager voice. "Oh, father, he is wounded!" And, as she spoke, Reduan's face grew white and he sank into the count's arms.

The count carried him tenderly to Elena's tent and laid him on the couch. Elena tremblingly brought her case of medicines and began to bind up Reduan's forehead.

"Oh, father," she cried tearfully, "he is so pale and still! Dost thou think he will die?"

"No, child; it is only a slight wound. But it is a brave, valiant youth, God bless him!"

Reduan slowly opened his eyes and smiled as he saw Elena's face bending over him; then, turning anxiously to the count, he asked, in the broken Spanish Elena remembered so well, if he might go back.

"Not until thou art fully able," answered the count, warmly. "But Granada surely needs thee. If all her sons were made of thy stuff, we should not be here before the walls."

Reduan blushed with pleasure. "It was naught," he said; "the son of Muza Gazan could not be otherwise." How proud he was to be able to say that!

By the next evening Reduan was his brave, strong self again, and begged once more to be allowed to go; but the count answered impetuously: "That shall not be. Thou art my prisoner until I have rewarded thee at thy worth."

He then led Reduan to the tent that was used as a chapel and told him he must pass the night in prayer. At sunrise the following morning this same chapel was filled with the knights and ladies of the court, all in the gayest dresses. Now the curtain of the tent was drawn aside, letting in the sunshine, and Elena caught her breath as she saw Reduan advancing toward the altar, clad in the pure white robe of a knight, his dark eyes flashing now with pride, and now lowered with humility.

Then it was that the queen advanced, and, smiling gently, buckled on him a shining cuirass inlaid with gold and jewels; the king brought his shield, the Marquis of Cadiz his helmet; and last of all Elena, with trembling, rosy fingers, buckled on the newly blessed sword.

Reduan dropped on one knee before her saying as he bowed his head:

"Be it known that the Countess Elena is my lady, for whose honor I shall fight; and

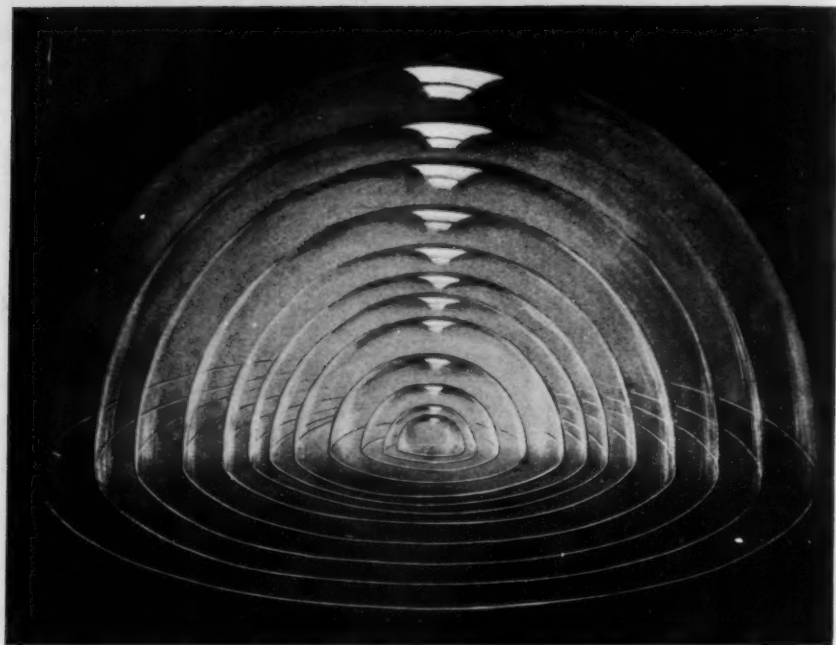


"NEAR THE LATTICED WINDOW STOOD A GIRL ABOUT ELENA'S OWN AGE. . . SHE HELD A NIGHTINGALE ON HER FINGER."

that she ever shall be my lady to my life's very end."

Then the Count of Cabra, standing beside them, struck him a slight blow on the shoulders with the flat of a sword, saying: "Reduan Gazan of Granada, I dub thee knight, in the name of God and St. James."

This was the reward the count had prepared for him, for with these words Reduan became a knight indeed.



TWELVE BUBBLES, ONE INSIDE OF THE OTHER.

THE "SOAP-BUBBLERS'" FIRST RECEPTION.

BY MEREDITH NUGENT.

THE "Soap-Bubblers'" reception was a success from the start.

The Soap-Bubblers — but recently organized, with our old friend Phil as Head Bubbler, Harry Baker as Chief Cornucopia, the minor Bubblers occupying minor odd-titled positions, as well as all Bubblers occupying no positions at all — had resolved that the ancient and honorable amusement of blowing soap-bubbles was sadly in need of reformation; and, further, that it was their mission to reform it.

Thus it came to pass that on this late blustery November evening the interior of Masonic Hall presented such a scene of brilliancy as had rarely been equaled within its historic walls.

Never shall I forget the fairy-like transformation which followed the signal for all Bubblers to begin "bubbling." The magician's wand had hardly fallen when there arose forty-seven large bubbles from forty-seven golden cornuco-

pias, held in the hands of forty-seven rosy-checked boys and girls standing by twenty-four little oblong tables. A cry of delight swept round the hall, and forty-seven more bubbles arose, and still another shower of the iridescent spheres glittered in the surrounding brilliancy before the Bubblers settled down to the business of the evening.

For this occasion every member had promised to perform at least one bubble trick, and to perform it well; so that when Eddie Stark showed a top spinning within a bubble, and Minnie Sargent — seated opposite — a beautiful rose within another, it was only an indication of the wonderful success which was to characterize the entire performance. Freddie Wilder did fully as well at the table allotted to him, while "Little Victor" cleverly dropped all sorts of objects through some beautiful bubbles blown by Frank Burt. Charley Tefft had

a table all to himself, and by his funny tricks with the soapy liquid kept the onlookers in a constant roar of laughter. At another table Arthur Taylor joyfully fried bubbles to order; near by was a delighted crowd looking at the "bubble-topped top."

I cannot tell you of all the many things I saw during the first hour—which seemed scarcely ten minutes—of this marvelous entertainment, except to refer to George Wingate's attempt to beat his own record of nine bubbles inside of one another. This achievement, from a Bubbler's standpoint, was the most important event of the early evening, and just before the intermission they crowded themselves into George's immediate neighborhood just as he had succeeded in raising his record to eleven. He now had one eleven, three tens, and any

ble inside of bubble was blown until eight had been scored quickly enough; then, with remarkable precision, he placed in three more, equaling his own best record of eleven; and finally, amid tumultuous applause, succeeded in putting in the twelfth bubble.

There was much rejoicing and hearty congratulation during the twenty minutes' intermission, and then Bubbler and spectators seated themselves in readiness for the principal part of the performance, which was to be given by Phil.

The idea had spread, somehow, that the Head Bubbler would treat them to another surprise, although what the nature of this would be, not any of the Bubbler knew, excepting Harry Baker and a few assistants.

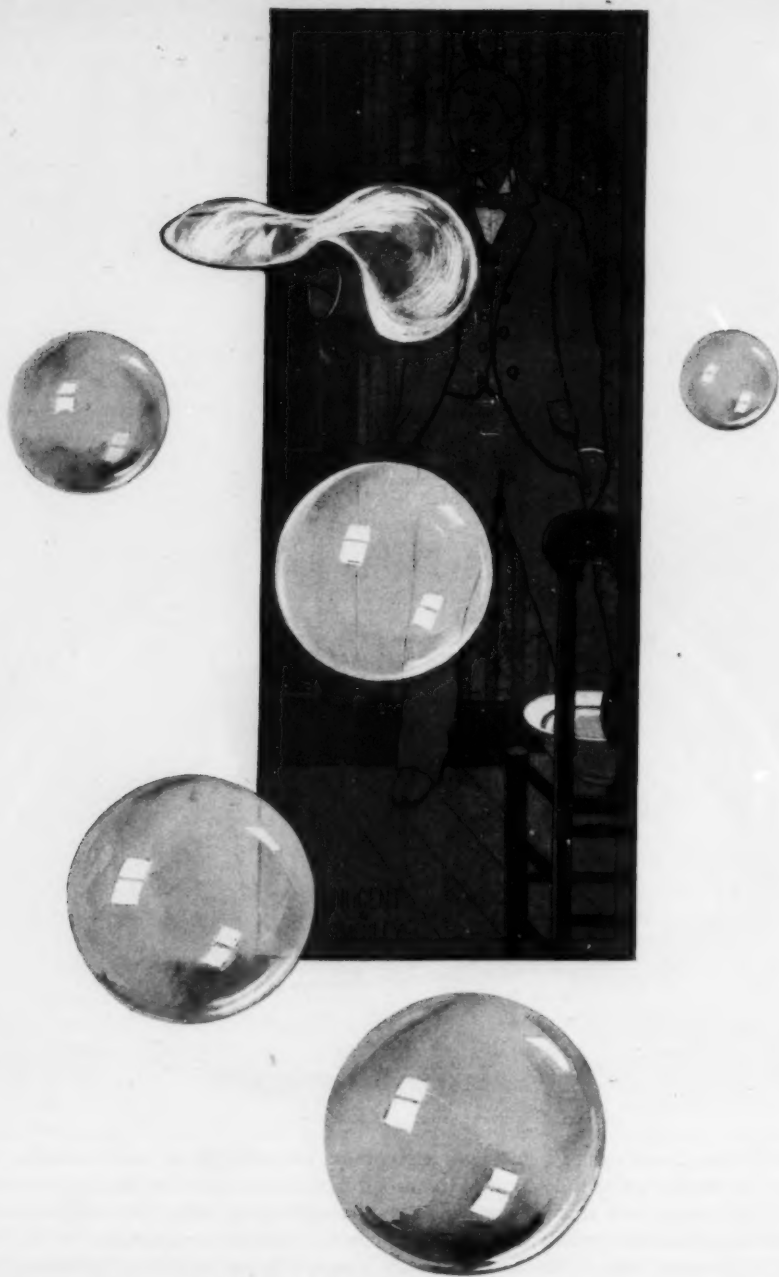
Promptly at nine Phil stepped on the plat-



"FIRST KITTENS EVER INSIDE OF A SOAP-BUBBLE!" (SEE PAGE 351.)

number of nines, and figures below that number to his credit, yet he determined to do better. He started off again by placing six bubbles with wonderful rapidity, but in putting in the ninth some broke. His next trial was still more unfortunate, as he failed on the fifth. The next attempt opened splendidly, and bub-

form, and was greeted most cordially. I failed to hear his opening remarks, as I was seated in the rear of the hall; but, whatever they were, every Bubbler boy jumped to his feet and shouted for joy, and every Bubbler girl jumped to her feet and waved her handkerchief for joy. Amid the uproar, I learned that Phil had an-



LARGE BUBBLES THROWN FROM A SOAPED WIRE RING.

nounced he would show the Bubblers how to make large bubbles without blowing them! The pandemonium increased when six Bubblers, with Harry Baker leading, formed in procession, and walked on to the platform, carrying between them two large galvanized-iron pans (each measuring nine feet in circumference), five children's wooden hoops, a number of copper and brass rings, two shining pails full of soap and water already mixed, and—think of it!—not a pipe, tube, or cornucopia of any kind! No wonder the audience shouted; no wonder the Bubblers waved aloft their gilded cornucopias. If Phil was not going to do something wonderful, what were all those pans, hoops, and copper and brass rings for? Why did he appear without a single cornucopia?

After a few words explanatory of the evolution of the soap-bubble from the clay-pipe stage to its present one, Phil dipped a wire ring into the solution, and, gently sweeping it before him, cast off a bubble fully twice the size of his head. Every Bubbler boy gave a cry of satisfaction at this, and it looked as though all the Bubblers might fling their golden cornucopias on to the stage, when the master of the soap and water tossed off five large bubbles in succession, not only from the same ring, but from the same film!

Almost immediately Phil's assistants—there were five of them—followed his example, and from that time on the stage was continually aglow with the brilliant spheres.

Harry Baker now came forward with the club's two kittens, and set them on a dry block of wood resting in the center of one of the large nine-foot pans—now filled with soapy water. Before the animals could move, Phil quickly lifted a hoop from the pan, and in a twinkling covered both kittens over with a glorious bubble. "First kittens ever inside of a soap-bubble!" Harry Baker announced, just as the little kits started to wade about within the iridescent dome. Phil sphered them over a second and even a third time, when the pussies, excited by their uproarious surroundings, offered decided objections to being imprisoned any more. Then Bubblers and audience were treated to an exhibition of what were perhaps the largest

bubbles that have ever been made. Harry Baker was especially fortunate, and, at the end of a very exciting contest with Phil, succeeded in sphering the pan over from brim to brim! Realize, if you please, that this bubble measured over nine feet in circumference! Phil followed up this feat of Harry's by launching from the large hoop a round bubble measuring fully six feet in circumference! Compare this giant in size with the bubbles you have been used to blowing from clay pipes. As one Bubbler hilariously remarked, this was "more like a balloon show than a bubble show." Not the least noticeable fact was that the bubbles often measured twice the diameter of the rings from which they were thrown. Remarkable, too, was the ease with which both boys picked up the films with their hoops. These hoops, measuring from thirty to thirty-four inches in diameter, when thus filmed over, flashed like disks of waving gold. Phil slowly revolved one of these golden disks upon the tips of his fingers, and a moment later the audience were enthusiastically applauding another of our magician's startling surprises. Here were two large elongated bubbles, springing from the same film, attached to each other in the center, and yet traveling in opposite directions, as shown in the illustration on page 354.

There seemed to be no limit to Phil's storehouse of wonders, and the spectators, who up to this time had been so very vociferous, settled down to a state of mute astonishment. "What will he do next?" was on everybody's lips. Though somewhat fatigued, the wizard of the soap and water adhered strictly to business, and now requested the audience to give their closest attention to his next performance. With a small ring in his left hand, and one twice the diameter of this in his right, Phil slowly advanced to the edge of the stage, where he covered both of the wire circles with a film. Then, from the smaller ring, he tossed a bubble high up above his head, and as the sphere slowly descended, he made a sweeping movement with the ring in his right hand in such a manner that he completely enveloped the small bubble within a second and much larger one. For a moment the Bubblers looked at each other in perfect amazement, and then

broke forth into heartiest applause. Phil responded with an encore, and again a bubble, imprisoned within another, swept its way across the stage. As I fixed my eyes upon these glittering spheres, I noticed the imprisoned bubble strike upon the bottom of the larger one, and

achievement; but, as Harry enthusiastically announced to the audience, there were more tricks to come. More tricks? What else could be done?

Fairly beaming with satisfaction at the success of his double-bubble trick, Phil took a large



"THE RESULT WAS A WHOLE SHOWER OF BUBBLES." (SEE PAGE 355.)
(These bubbles are thrown from a network of wires crossing a wooden frame.)

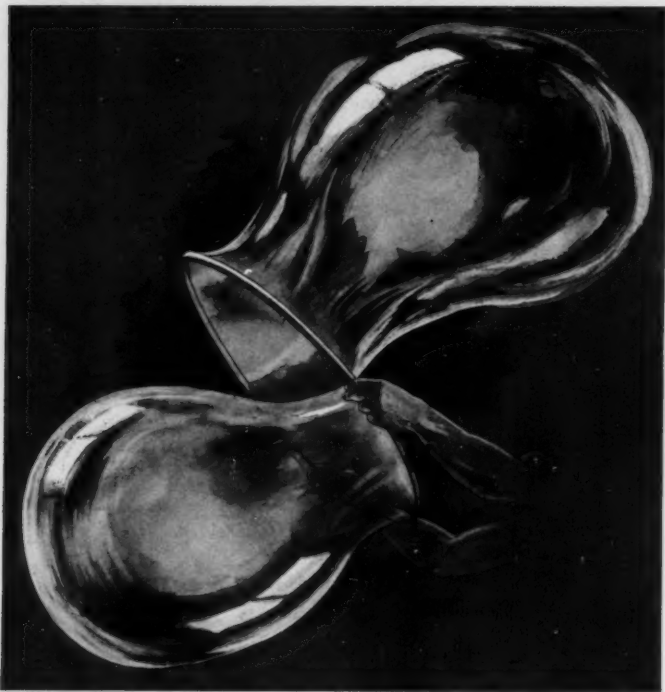
bound up again. This it did a number of times. Phil might have spent the remainder of the evening in repetition of this beautiful

hoop, and dipping it in one of the great pans, withdrew it covered by a film. Then he held the lustrous disk well up in front of him, and

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"THE JOLLIEST OF THE BUBBLERS LOOKED SMILINGLY UPON THE AUDIENCE
FROM WITHIN A SOAP-FILM HOUSE!" (SEE PAGE 355.)



TWO LARGE BUBBLES SPRINGING FROM THE SAME FILM AND TRAVELING IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS.

started to blow. Had our magician been in league with the spirits of the mythical North,



"THE SMALL BUBBLE WAS COMPLETELY ENVELOPED WITHIN A SECOND AND MUCH LARGER ONE."

he could hardly have produced a result more weird and fantastic.

Starting from the hoop, first slowly, and then almost shooting forth, was an ever-moving, ever-lengthening, ever-varying, twisting, writhing shape — such a form, in fact, as might have found existence in the imagination of Edgar Allan Poe. When Phil and Harry, together with their assistants, gave themselves up fully to this exhibition of monsters, the stage looked as though peopled by one of the hobgoblin races. Sometimes great bubbles, five feet in circumference, would snap off the end of these soap-bubble dragons, and sometimes a number of very small ones. In length they varied from two to eight feet — that is, measurement in a straight line. Could all the windings and twistings have been taken into consideration, they would have been found far longer.

Phil now turned his attention to the hoops and rings again, and drew forth storms of applause by some wonderful "film tricks." One

in particular, the giant letter S, was especially brilliant. It looked like a serpentine tongue of flame, and the manner in which Phil whirled the flashing light above his head fairly thrilled the audience.

Placing the ring aside, he picked up a curiously made wood and wire framework, and, after covering it with film, swished it through the air with a long, sweeping movement. The result was a whole shower of bubbles—single, double, and triple bubbles! This display was very effective, and had to be repeated ever so many times before the Bubbblers were satisfied.

"Leroy Kimball!" now shouted out Harry Baker. "Leroy Kimball!" And a minute later there walked on to the stage the youngest, shortest, and jolliest Bubbler in the club. Everybody knew Roy, and as the little fellow blushing stepped on to the square block of wood set fast in the middle of the big pan, he was greeted with loud cheers and cries of "What are you going to do there, Roy?"

Phil promptly began to answer this volley of questions by lowering a hoop over the little Bubbler until it lay immersed in the pan of soapy mixture. "Oh!" cried the Bubbblers in unison, "Phil's going to put Roy in a soap-bubble!" And the excited audience rose to their tiptoes.

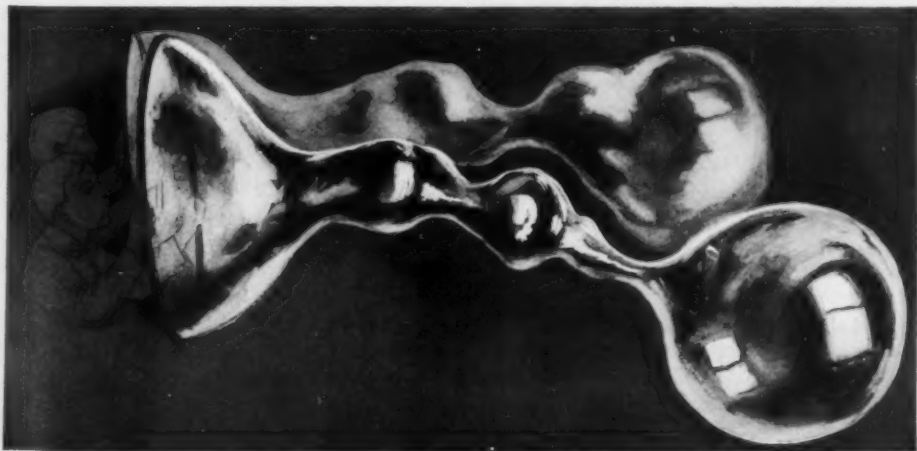
Amid a profound silence Phil started to lift the hoop; but after raising it a short distance, the film broke with a peculiar noise, sounding



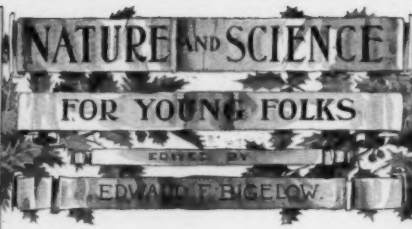
"THE GIANT LETTER S."

like "w-h-e-e-p." "W-h-e-e-p" went the film again, "w-h-e-e-p, w-h-e-e-p."

Suddenly there was a swish, a flashing gleam of silvery light, and Leroy Kimball, the jolliest of the Bubbblers, looked smilingly upon the audience from within a soap-film house!



"AN EVER-MOVING, EVER-LENGTHENING, EVER-VARYING, TWISTING, WRITHING SHAPE."



THE OUTDOOR WORLD.

QUEER HOMES IN ICY PALACES.

UNDER the ice of the pond or brook, in queer little homes or cases, are the interesting creatures known as the caddis-worms or caddis-larvæ.



AN "ICY PALACE"—A FROZEN BROOK IN WINTER.

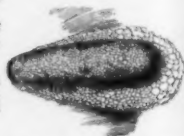
They can be obtained by breaking the ice and plunging in a long-handled dipper or net.

A common glass dish (not a jar) makes an excellent aquarium in which to place them and study their habits. Cover the bottom with sand, add tiny gravel stones, a twig, a few leaves (willow preferred), and a piece of water-starwort, or some other plant that grows in water, and your little guests will have all that they require to make and repair their overcoats, and you will find, by watching the various species, that their manners and customs differ from each other almost as widely as the shapes and materials of their cases. Whether there is any connection between the strength of the case and the habits of its maker, is an interesting problem for all of us to study.

For example, there is the well-protected caddis known as the *Molanna* larva, that moves

with curious, intermittent jerks; and as its flat case of sand allows neither head nor legs to be seen from above, the effect is as if a patch of sand were traveling about by itself.

The larvæ of two other kinds are very pretty swimmers. One makes a slender, pointed case, of bits of water-starwort arranged in a spiral; the other makes a short tube of sand and bark; and both protrude their fore legs and swim about merrily.



MOLANNA'S HOME IN ITS CASE OF SAND.

The larger larva, called the *Neuronia*, has a striped yellow face, and an overcoat made of large pieces of leaves fastened by their edges into a cylinder. I call it the "Iroquois," because it is forever on the war-path, traveling restlessly about the aquarium, pausing only to kill and eat other insects, so that, unless the aquarium is to be depopulated, it is necessary to keep this small savage in a dish by himself, where he can be fed on rare beef. While his manner seems to us very savage, that manner is, doubtless, from his point of view only greater industry in seeking food.



HOME OF THE "IROQUOIS" IN BITS OF LEAVES FASTENED TOGETHER, WITH CAP FOR THE END.

A species of about the same size, which I name "Huronian," after a more peaceable tribe of Indians, clothes itself in a sort of log-cabin of cross-wise twigs, has a gray face with a mild expression, and is gentle in its temper and tranquil in its movements. C. H. C.



THE "LOG-CABIN" HOMES OF LITTLE STICKS WITH THE ROUND CAP OR DOOR AT THE END.

A CADDIS-HOME OF BITS OF BARK AND LITTLE STICKS.

ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY AT HOME.

EVERY girl and boy may have one of the largest astronomical observatories in the world. Possibly many will say, "That can't be, for I have read of the Yerkes Observatory at Williams Bay, Wisconsin, and the next largest, the Lick,



ENJOYING THE STARS FROM THE LAWN IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE.

at Mount Hamilton, California, and the other large observatories, and I cannot hope to have one as large as those."

You mean that those have large telescopes and large buildings. Let us look at the Century Dictionary, and see what an observatory is. Here is the part of the definition that applies to your observatory: "A *place* or building . . . for making observations. An astronomical observatory is so planned as to secure . . . an unobstructed view, together with such arrangements as will otherwise facilitate observations."

So your observatory, one of the largest in the world, is the *place* near your home where

you can get the best view of the starry sky, from the point directly overhead, called the zenith, to the great circle where earth and sky seem to meet, called the horizon. Other places may have large buildings and instruments, but no more of the sky than from zenith to horizon can be seen. Find your best observatory,—that is, where you can get the most "unobstructed view,"—and make "such arrangements" of easy-chairs, dark lanterns, star-maps, and opera- and field-glasses as you may be able to obtain. Even with no aid from glasses, you may see stars billions of miles away, and the beautiful groups called constellations, that have been named and written and talked about for centuries. Try this on the next starry, moonless night, and then write the editor of this department, telling what you saw.

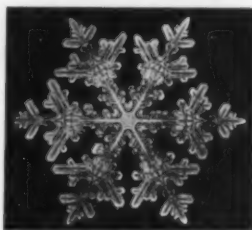
THE SNOW CRYSTALS.

How beautiful is the snow, as the flakes fall, winging their way night and day to the fields, trees, and houses! We like to watch them as they come so silently and gracefully, and we like to see the white covering over the earth. In the parks and in the country the trees are very attractive in their rich ornaments, of which Lowell says:

The poorest twig on the elm-tree
Was ridged inch-deep with pearl.

Then what a variety of sports comes with the snow! There 's snow-balling, fort-building, sliding, and sleighing with the musical bells. But these are not all the beauty and enjoyment to be obtained from the snow. The snow-flakes are made up of beautiful crystals. In each storm, and in different parts of the same storm, there are presented new patterns of the little flakes.

Without any aid to our eyes we can see much beauty in the flakes as they fall on our clothes, and by examining them with a pocket-lens, on a piece of black cloth or card, we can



A MAGNIFIED SNOWFLAKE WITH FEATHERY AND VERY ORNAMENTAL ARMS.

see still more, and can easily make a sketch of the forms. For several years, Mr. W. A. Bentley of Nashville, Vermont, has been photographing them through a microscope, and he sends us a few beautiful pictures of these magnified forms from his large collection.

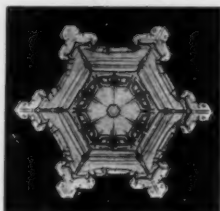


ROUGH SPEARS AROUND A JEWEL CENTERPIECE.

Not all are beautiful, nor all in the flowery form. Because the very best are rare, there will be all the greater joy in hunting for them.

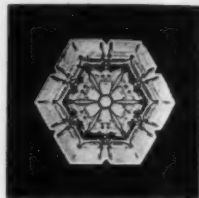
Press a broom-splint lightly upon the edge of the crystal, and it will stick to it so it can be

nified forms from his large collection. He finds that in some storms the crystals are large and feathery, in others solid like little balls, and often they are little rough, glistening, icy needles.



SIX THREEFOLD KNOTS AROUND A PRETTY "MAT."

crystals are found in greatest numbers, especially if the wind is from the west or north. Then the crystals fall singly, in good form for examination; for they are not very likely to become clustered into large flakes that float down in the still air like big feathers, as is often the case in smaller, less severe storms.



PLAIN OUTSIDE AND BEAUTIFUL INTERIOR PATTERN.



FOR A COZY EVENING.

NATURE is a kind and loving mother, and owns many pleasures given freely to those who see and think carefully. We not only delight in our own discoveries, but share in the pleasure and enthusiasm of others. "Study-table evenings" might be made frequent, enjoyable, and profitable in many St. NICHOLAS homes.

Old and young, in all seasons, in city or country, can find much of interest to be studied. Perhaps you have for this evening several bundles of twigs from different trees and shrubs near your home. While you are looking at them, with their interesting buds, or have in



hand other specimens, I will tell you of some interesting things in nature and science.

GROWING FIGS IN CALIFORNIA.

PLANTS and insects are in very friendly relations. The insects carry from flower to flower, in their visits for the sweet nectar, the pollen which is necessary in order to produce fruit and seeds. The fig requires a special insect. If we bring the fig-plant from its home in Greece, Smyrna, or other foreign places, and wish it to thrive, we must bring the insect, too.

Professor L. O. Howard, of the United States Department of Agriculture, has been in California for a few weeks past, experimenting with these fig-plants and their insects, which are called *Blastophagas*, and has been meeting with good success; which means that there are good prospects of fig-culture in California.

TEA-GROWING IN THIS COUNTRY.

OVER fifty years ago tea was successfully grown in this country, but not to a great extent. Our government aided the attempt by money fifteen years ago, but the result at that time, for various reasons, was not successful. About ten years ago the work was taken up at Summerville, South Carolina, on a small scale, which has gradually increased till now over fifty acres are planted with tea. The crop is picked mostly by negro children. Near the tea-gardens a school-house was built and a teacher engaged for it. The colored families of the neighborhood were then invited to send their children to this school free of charge. Here they had the ordinary school-work, and also were taught to pick tea so they could earn money to buy food and clothing.

The tea-bushes are low and thick. The colored children, both boys and girls, pick the leaves, which are then taken to the building called the factory. The leaves are roasted in an iron pot, and rolled by hand on a table. The superintendent of the farm thinks that tea will be grown extensively in this country in the near future.

THE PASSENGER-PIGEON.

UNTIL about twenty years ago, the passenger-pigeons, commonly called wild pigeons, were very plentiful. John Burroughs wrote: "Few spectacles please me more than to see *clouds* of the passenger-pigeons sweeping across the sky, and few sounds are more agreeable to my ear than their lively piping and calling in the spring woods."

It was not then uncommon to see them in immense numbers; now they are nearly extinct, but not wholly, as has often been claimed. A few were seen in various parts of the country this past autumn. In one case it was claimed that a fair-sized flock was seen. It is frequently but incorrectly reported, in newspapers and otherwise, that the Smithsonian Institution at Washington has offered a reward for specimens. If there were to be any reward in this matter, it should be a reward offered by each State for the capture and punishment of any person who kills one of these beautiful and rare birds.

PHOTOGRAPHING STARS AND PLANETS.

LAST February, the Harvard College Observatory at Cambridge, Massachusetts, proposed a plan of a telescope of unusual length for photographing stars and planets. People interested in science have given money for that purpose, and a telescope over one hundred feet long has been completed. The glass is twelve inches in diameter. Ordinarily a telescope with an object-glass of that size would be only from fifteen to eighteen feet long. This unusually long telescope is an experiment. Astronomers think it will have especial advantages in photography.

THE NORTH STAR.

DOUBTLESS you all know where the North Star is. If not, you can easily get some one to tell you, or, better still, perhaps you can find it yourself. Look at the northern sky any clear evening and you can easily find the seven bright stars of the Big Dipper in the group (constellation) *Ursa Major*. As is well known, the two in the end of the bowl of the Dipper are in line with, or point to, the North Star.

This star has recently attracted much attention from the fact that in September, 1899, Professor W. W. Campbell of the Lick Observatory, Mount Hamilton, California, announced that it is really three stars which appear as one.

Even the big telescope, with its glass a yard across, at his observatory could not tell that, as the star is so far off; although the telescope can show a great deal of the form and surface markings of the sun, moon, and planets, and help us to see millions of stars not visible to the unaided eye.

Professor Campbell attached to this telescope an instrument called the spectroscope, which analyses the light itself, and tells what it is made of, and whether the star from which it comes is in motion or at rest, and whether coming toward us or going away.

He found by careful study that Polaris is really three stars though appearing to our eyes as only one, and that the three are revolving around one another, and that the group is ap-

proaching the earth at the rate of about seven miles a second.

Mizar, which is the star in the handle of the Dipper at the point where it appears to be broken, was discovered at the Harvard Observatory in 1889 to be multiple: and, as in the case of Polaris, the spectroscope revealed the secret. It was found at that time, and noticed many times since, that the lines of the spectroscope changed once in fifty-two days. As these

lines also changed irregularly at other times, it is suspected that Mizar is made up of more than two stars.

So you see that some of our bright stars are not really one, but several stars appearing as one. As they are billions of miles away, even our best telescopes cannot see them as they really are, but the spectroscope shows that what seems to us one star is sometimes really a group of stars—a star family.



SEE AND TELL.

NEXT to the pleasure of observing is that of telling. Discoveries in nature and science are not selfish—at least, with the young folks. "See what I have found!" is the natural expression of desire to share the pleasure with a playmate or teacher.

I have two good eyes, and so has every one of my grown-up friends assisting me, but not one of us has better eyes than many of you, and we will enjoy having you tell us and others what you have seen. Here are letters relating what some of our wide-awake young observers have to tell us:

WESTMINSTER DEPOT, MASS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I think it is very funny how the muskrats can live in the mud for a while and then come up to the surface and stay for many hours.

What I have seen are of a brownish color. They have a little black on the tip of their nose and on their toes. They are not much larger than a large rat. The only difference that I can see between a muskrat and a large common rat is in the color, shape, and fur. They can dive like a beaver. If you see one on the ice in the winter, he would be sitting on the ice eating an apple or trying to find something to eat. The way to catch these animals is to set traps that will kill them right off or catch them so they cannot get out, or, if they are very large, you could catch them in a steel trap. But if they are small they will gnaw their own leg off.

I must close now. Yours, HFRMAN N. CURTIS.

DUNKIRK, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am now in the high school, and have not as much time as before, but shall keep up my nature work. My former teacher assists us considerably in our nature work. We are to have some badge-pins soon.

I have been gathering many autumn leaves and pressing them, and am now going to wax them. I think they will be very nice after I get them done. I would like to ask you a question, and it is this: What can I put on my leaves so as to have the green stuff come off without hurting the veinlets?

I must close, hoping you will answer soon.

EDNA MOSER.

BIG FLATS, N. Y.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: This past autumn we have had many pleasant trips in the fields. Our teachers and a grown-up friend from Cornell University asked us to go out and find the seed-travelers. We went down in the old pasture, all the boys and girls running just the same as the colts that I saw scampering up the hillside when we went through the bars of the fence. May said: "See these horrid sticktights; my clothes are just covered." Burr called one kind "pitchforks."

"I know," said Bessie, "they are seeds; Uncle John said so."

"They stick fast to us," said Hulda.

"Just look at these burdocks," said Ray; "they're just as bad as the others."

I think we all found enough seed-travelers, and we had a hard time brushing them off when we got home. I think they will grow where we brushed them off, don't you think so?

We wrapped each kind in a paper and put the name on it. I had about thirty papers, and my table looked as if the doctor had been here and left a lot of powders.

ANNA G.—

ATHENS, PA.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Last May I decided to make a bird-house and see if any birds would come to live in it. I took a box and put a piece of board in the middle of it,

so that two families of birds could live in it, if they wanted to. Then I put it up in a tree and watched it for several weeks; but no birds came near it.

One day, my mother learned that the Bureau of Nature Study of Cornell University was trying to get children all over the United States to start Naturalist Clubs. I wrote for one of their leaflets, and the one they sent me was about birds. It also told how to start a club and named several other leaflets which they had published, so I sent for them. I took them around among my friends, and eight or ten of them were soon interested. In about a week we organized our club, and elected a president and an assistant secretary. We chose the dragon-fly for our emblem, because its head is nearly all eyes. One of the members had read a story of some children who had a Naturalist Club, and we named our club after theirs, the "Inquisitive Investigators Club." Our call is "Eye, eye, dragon-fly!" A college professor who lives here found us our motto: "Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." We have meetings every two weeks, and take rambles every week when the weather is pleasant.

In the summer we hunted for insects and flowers, in the autumn for seeds, and this winter we are studying the twigs of apple-trees. Our club has been organized six months, and we have collected one hundred and thirty-four specimens, including butterflies, moths, dragon-flies, bugs, and beetles. Our president mounted them, and I have hunted up about half the names. They are going to be on exhibition in our museum, which is upstairs in our new library building. We are also going to have a place in our library where we can keep books and leaflets on natural history.

LOUIE E. MURRAY.

"INQUISITIVE INVESTIGATORS."



THAT'S the name of the club of girls and boys at Athens, Pennsylvania, and that name expresses the spirit of all young scientists, as well as older ones.

The letters from all our sharp-eyed girls and boys show that they have the good foundation — a desire to learn.

TWO KINDS OF WINGS.

MARLBOROUGH, MASS.

4. This cricket has wings very different from those of the cricket I caught a few minutes ago. Is this a different kind of a cricket?

G. C.

ANS. It is not another kind in the sense that we mean when we say another "species,"

or group, but it is another sex. This is the male cricket with short wings, looking on the top of the "box form" like a delicately engraved shield or a badge. You see it is of a beautiful pattern. On the little ridges there are a "scraper" and a "file," as they have been called. When the cricket wishes to call, he raises these wings so that the scraper of one rests on the file of the other, then one is moved back and forth so as to make the "music"—a sort of insect violin.

He's a patient little hummer,
Though he only knows one song.
He's been practising all summer,
And he never sings it wrong.

The other is the female cricket, with the longer, plainly veined wings. I will tell you more about the crickets later. In the meantime, can't some one tell me something about them? Did you ever put them under an inverted tumbler and feed them with bread or a bit of apple?

5. How does the house-fly walk up or down on the smooth glass of the window, or along the ceiling with feet up? D. T. W.

My young friend is to be congratulated on having a mind that thinks and wants to know reasons. Every one has probably seen this common occurrence, but most people, old and young, take it for granted that "it just walks, that's all," as an older friend once expressed it.

At the tip of each leg are two claws that are especially for assistance in walking on rough surfaces. Between these claws is a tiny cushion-like pad, which is called the empodium, and has also several other big names. From this pad extend many small hairs with ends slightly knob-like, and through these hairs is given out a sticky liquid. This is so difficult to see, even with a microscope, that scientific men were in doubt about this till within a few years.

So the foot sticks to the smooth surface, strong enough to hold the weight of the fly, but not strong enough to prevent the fly from pulling up the foot as each step is taken.



"But twenty-eight, and one day more
We add to it one year in four—"
Till nineteen hundred comes around,
And then no extra day is found.

POOR February! Our way of dividing time into years and seasons is not perfect, and it is she who must bear the burden of it all. Other months go along peacefully and unchanged through year after year, with their full measure of thirty or thirty-one days, while little, cheerless February struggles along with her twenty-eight, and the "one day more" which we grudgingly give her every four years, until at the very end of the century, when, of all times, she would like to make a good showing, we say, "No, little girl, not this year; we've given you more now than you deserve."

And February tries to be mild and pleasant about it, and makes each one of her precious days a little longer, with a little more sunshine in it, and the warmth of new life. Then presently there comes a day when we go along singing without knowing it, when the sparrows rattle and chatter and quarrel in the coping, and when along the melting snow-drift there is a fringe of green. Dear little February! She is stormy sometimes, and who could blame her! But beneath it all she is tender and patient, and, down where we cannot see, she is tenderly nursing the bloom and fragrance of summer-time.

"Nature and Science," a new department in **ST. NICHOLAS**, will appeal to League members, and to chapters especially. The fascinating facts of science to be presented, and those brought out in the "Correspondence" pages, will delight and benefit every reader, and furnish many subjects for discussion at League

chapter meetings. Members might collect and bring specimens to these meetings, and such questions as arise could be forwarded to the "Nature and Science" editor by their secretary.



POEM. The title to contain the word "valentine."

Gold badge, Margaret Widdemer, 221 East Thirty-first Street, New York city.

Silver badge, Charlotte F. Babcock, Downer Avenue, Dorchester, Massachusetts.

PROSE. "When Washington was Young."

Gold badge, Janet Percy Dana, 1a Fifth Avenue, New York.

Silver badge, Elford Eddy, 140 West Twenty-second Street, Los Angeles, California.

PEN DRAWING. "In Winter-time."

Gold badge, Marjorie Watmough, 21 Summit Street, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Silver badge, Marguerite Rogers, 1303 North Twelfth Street, Lafayette, Indiana.

PHOTOGRAPH. "December Byways."

Gold badge, Raymond Barker, 274 Chestnut Street, West Newton, Massachusetts.

Silver badge, Frederic Ullman, Jr., 282 Forty-eighth Street, Chicago, Illinois.

PUZZLE. To contain some word or reference to Washington, or to one of his victories.

Gold badge, Marian Johnson (address wanted).

Silver badge, Walter C. Holmes, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

PUZZLE-ANSWERS. Best and neatest to December puzzles.

Gold badge, Grace C. Norton, 3855 California Street, Omaha, Nebraska.

Silver badge, Tessie McMechan, 368 King Street, London, Ontario, Canada.

Owing to the unusual excellence of work received from two very young members this month, it has been decided that two additional gold badges be awarded as follows:

POEM. "My Valentine." By Helen Read, 301 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Age 10.

DRAWING. "In Winter-time." By Henry Clinton Hutchins, 166 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts. Age 10.

By a curious coincidence, both of these talented young contributors live on the same street and in the same city.

WHEN WASHINGTON WAS YOUNG.

BY JANET PERCY DANA.

(Gold Badge.)

It was the winter of 1750, and on this particular evening Williamsburg looked wide awake, for Governor Dinwiddie was holding a levee. This the grand coaches which were constantly arriving showed plainly.

Within, the audience-chamber was brilliantly lighted, and ladies leaning on the arms of gentlemen in court costume promenaded to and fro. From the adjoining room came sounds of music, for a minuet was in progress, in which youths and girls, some still in their teens, were taking part.

The governor was walking through the assembly, conversing earnestly with a handsome young man whose gentle manners and manly bearing were attracting some attention. Now and then he bowed graciously as some young beauty curtsied before him. In the course of his tour through the rooms, he paused before a lady and her daughter, a girl of sixteen. She was not beautiful, but very attractive, with her pleasant mouth and laughing eyes, while her hair defied all the hair-dresser's art with its irrepressible curls.

The governor smiled at her, and, bowing to her mother, said:

"Madam Henry, I crave the favor of a few words."

Then, turning to the girl:

"Miss Betty, allow me to present to you a partner for the evening, Mr. George Washington."

Betty curtsied, and, taking Washington's proffered arm, walked to the dancing-room, where both were soon engaged in the intricacies of a minuet.

It was a never-to-be-forgotten evening. Dance followed dance, and in the same delightful company she enjoyed the supper for which Virginia cooks were, and are still, famous.

When at last it came to an end, Washington saw Betty and her mother to their coach, and, thanking her for her company, raised her hand to his lips. So ended Betty's first ball, but not her acquaintance with Washington, which lasted till death.

To-day, on the mantel of a Virginia manor-house, there rest a faded glove and the miniature of a girl. The children look at them with awe, but often beg for the story of great-grandmother Betty, whose hand Washington kissed, and who knew him as a youth and as the man who was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.

A LOST VALENTINE.

BY MARGARET WIDDEMER.

(Gold Badge.)

Oh, who are you, in silk and gold,
So gaily riding by?

"A gallant I of faeryland—
An airy land, a merry land—
A true knight I of faeryland
Upon a dragon-fly."

What seek ye, far from faeryland?
For fast and fast ye fare.

"I come to seek my valentine—
A ladye fine, a true love mine—
A sweet maid for a valentine,
With sunlit eyes and hair."

Oh, I have seen your sweet ladye
In wand'rings wide and far.
But she is held in weary thrall—

In dreary thrall, uncheery thrall;
They hold her fast in cruel thrall
Where snow and shadows are.

"Oh, I will go and rescue her,
My faery maiden lone;
And she shall be my valentine,
For whom I pine, this ladye mine—
And she shall be my valentine,
My true love and my own."

WHEN WASHINGTON WAS YOUNG.

BY ELFORD EDDY.

(Silver Badge.)

NEAR the shore of the Potomac River, at a spot between Bridge's Creek and Pope's Creek, there lies a stone slab, crumbled and overgrown with vines, which bears this inscription:

HERE,
ON THE 11TH FEBRUARY, 1732,
GEORGE WASHINGTON
WAS BORN.

There is not a sign of the house in which our first President first saw light. It was burned soon after George's birth. Some bricks taken from the chimney of the house form a bed upon which the stone slab lies. This is the sole landmark.



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY MARJORIE WATMOUGH. (GOLD BADGE.)

After the house was burned the family removed to a spot on the Rappahannock River opposite Fredericksburg.

Here George Washington spent his childhood. At a country school he learned to read, write, and cipher. His copy-books were a model of neatness.

Young Washington was a tall, athletic fellow, and fond of all outdoor sports. His playmates took pride in pointing out the spot where he had once stood and thrown a stone across the Rappahannock River.

The story of Madam Washington's favorite colt, and how George conquered him, is familiar to all. It shows that George Washington did not fear to speak the truth.

Augustine Washington, George's father, died when George was eleven years old, and the boy was left to the care of an excellent mother. Madam Washington made George the truthful, honorable, brave man that he became.

Boys have always delighted to play soldier. "Captain" George had a juvenile military organization, which



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY MARGUERITE ROGERS. (SILVER BADGE.)

he drilled and paraded with all the show of a drum-major.

George's oldest brother had been a soldier, and he wished George to enter his Majesty's service. George thought he would like to become a sailor, and Lawrence Washington procured for him a warrant as midshipman in the navy.

Madam Washington did not cherish the idea of her son becoming a sailor. She refused to allow George to go to sea just as he was about to go aboard his ship.

When George Washington was fourteen he went to visit his brother Lawrence, who owned an estate at Mount Vernon. Together they went down the river to visit the Fairfaxes. Here George made the acquaintance of Lord Fairfax, an English nobleman. Something in this tall, quiet boy appealed to the old man, and they soon became warm friends.

George Washington and a friend surveyed Lord Fairfax's land. This was his first step in life toward independent manhood.

MY VALENTINE.

BY HELEN READ (AGE 10).

(Special Gold Badge.)

THERE came to me a valentine.
I thought and I thought who it came from;
But that was too much for me.

Mama said, "It may be Johnny, Mary, or Ruth."
But I never knew;
My little valentine was the only one who knew it.

THE LITTLE VALENTINE.

BY CHARLOTTE F. BARCOCK.

(Silver Badge.)

A LITTLE valentine am I,
And you would hear my tale, you said,
My little maid with sparkling eye
And dimpled cheeks so rosy red.

I 'm decked in filmy golden lace,
With snow-white doves and golden hearts,
And Cupid, with his winsome face,
Holding a quiver filled with darts.

With other valentines I dwell,
And many a time suppressed a sigh,
And secret pangs of envy felt,
For some were fairer far than I.

One day a jolly little lad
Bought me, *liked* me the very best;
And oh, it made my heart so glad
To be preferred to all the rest!

He left me here for you to-day,
And he just rang this very bell,
And at this moment runs away,
And hurries to his home, pell-mell.

To you, dear little maiden mine,
I bear his message, heartfelt, true.
Only a little valentine,
And yet I had my work to do.

MY VALENTINE.

BY JAMES STRATTON CARPENTER.

'T WAS on a wintry evening,
The weather it was fine,
When I asked my little lady
To be my valentine.

You think she was a lady
Of twenty-one or so.
But ah! you are mistaken;
She's just my age, you know.

We were standing on the door-step,
And her answer I could guess;
And as a cloud passed o'er the moon,
She softly answered, "Yes."

Then home I went in triumph —
I never felt so fine:
Because my little lady
Was now my valentine.

INTERESTING PARAGRAPHS FROM OUR PROSE-WRITERS.

Subject, "When Washington was Young."

From the essay of Ruth Eliza Pett, age 7:

"When George Washington was a small boy his father got him a hatchet. George had been wanting it for some time. So he went out and chopped down his father's cherry-tree."

The above sheds a new light on little George's reason for cutting down the tree. He had grown tired of "wanting" that hatchet. And this essay by I. C. Elmer,

who does not give his age, but who is perhaps eight, gives us some idea of these times:

"I will tell you what people did when George was young. The men wore powdered wigs. Both men and women used snuff. Plenty of tobacco was raised and sold. The men wore cocked and three-cornered hats. The Indians were plentiful and wild."

THE VALENTINE.

BY LAURA E. MCCULLY.

HE made a little valentine,
And left it at her door.
A cavalier of six was he,
His lady-love was four.

He wrote, in baby letters round:
"Deer Elcie, I love yu,
And when I 'm prinse in faryland,
Yu 'll be the prinse to."

But little Jamie went to win
His spurs in other lands,
And Elsie laid a marigold
Upon his folded hands.

"He 's lots of gold up there," she said,
"And shining flowers, I know;
But maybe he will 'member 'bout
The ones he helped me grow."

Her hair was gray, her face was worn,
Her heart was aching hard,
When, searching in a musty drawer,
She found the little card.

And then she saw beyond the skies
Her little love of old.
He smiled, and in his hand he held
A yellow marigold.

GEMS FROM YOUNG POETS.

The following are stanzas selected from a number of the good poems received. Some of them are pretty, some amusing, and all of them interesting.

Margaret Doane Gardiner's poem is cleverly done and has a pretty fancy. We quote the first four lines:

Once a pretty bluebird lighted on a tree,
Sighing in the sunshine, "Oh, dear me!"
"What," I cried, "has vexed you, sighing there
above?"

And the bluebird answered, "T is my love."

Rebecca F. Isaacs has an excellent idea of rhyme and rhythm, as the following stanza will show:

On Valentine's Day came a missive gay
To the pearl of girls, our Margery fair,
The blue of the skies in her shining eyes,
The glint of the sun in her golden hair.

In a pretty poem by May A. Chambers a little girl plays a jolly little joke on her mama:

I felt two arms go round my neck,
And a little voice in my ear:
"I thought I 'd be your valentine—
Do you like it, mother dear?"

There is a pretty picture presented in these lines by Inez Josephine Gardner:

A little fairy messenger—
His pink cheeks all aglow—
Flies ever through the falling mist,
Bearing a silver bow.

Harold Hoover's poem is irregular in its meter, but it contains some good lines:

I went to the window as she passed by,
And her beautiful face made the gloomy sky
Like a sweet spring day;
The singing of birds was in my heart
As she came this way—my valentine.

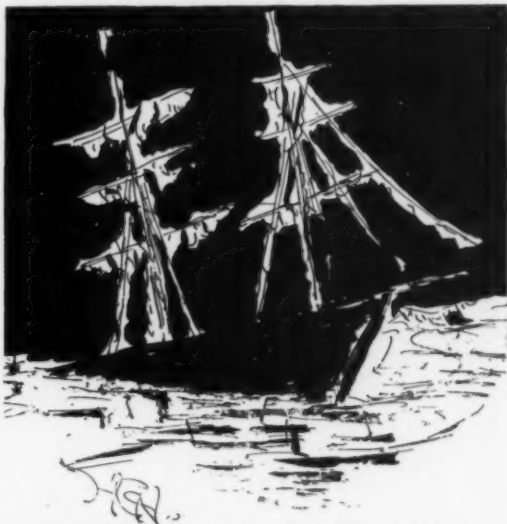
And no one could have a better valentine than little Elinor Kreer, who is ten years old, and writes these charming lines:

My valentine 's my mama, for she 's the very one
To comfort all my sorrow and join me in my fun.
When I was but a little babe she loved me night and
day;
When I was naughty she would scold, yet I shall
always say,

"My valentine 's my mama."

Leo Schiff writes of a grandfather's day-dreams on Valentine's Eve:

The wedding in the village church,
The birth of Kate and John and Sue,
Two graves beneath the churchyard sod—
All this his memory brings to view.
He hears a step—he turns his head,
To spy a fair-haired lass of nine.
"What dost thou wish?" he smiling says.
"Why, grandpa, I 'm your valentine!"



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY HENRY CLINTON HUTCHINS, AGE 10.
(SPECIAL GOLD BADGE.)

Bessie Alter, another little poet of ten, begins with these pretty lines:

Loving maid with eyes divine,
Wilt thou be my valentine?
You have blue eyes and golden hair;
Your skin is soft and smooth and fair.

While Ruth S. Lighton sings of the joy that comes to sweet old age:

Although so old in years, sweetheart,
This lesson you and I
May learn together ere we part:
"True love can never die."

Grace B. Coolidge was pleased with one of her valentines, as you will see:

Oh, I've a valentine from my love —
The daintiest little letter;
'T is filled with rhymes of "love" and "dove,"
And I never saw any better.

Lucille E. Rosenberg's valentine begins very prettily: She was a lovely maiden most beauteous to behold; Her cheeks were pale, her eyes were blue, her hair was flaxen gold.

Now and then there is something of the good old spirit in the boys of to-day. Arthur Edward Weld writes as men wrote in the brave days of old:

Here 's to the girl that I love best!
The one more beautiful than the rest.



"DECEMBER BYWAYS." BY RAYMOND BARKER. (GOLD BADGE.)

Her voice is like the birds in June,
Her eyes as bright as the sun at noon.

Irene R. Tucker's contribution is so short that we can print it in full. And this, you see, is an advantage.

This valentine I send to thee
To beg thy heart be sent to me.
Be sure and mark it "C. O. D."
Yours forever, I. R. T.

Grace M. Bernstein's little stanza tells of a little valentine disappointment, such as all must expect:

The postman blew his whistle loud.
My sister said, "It 's mine!"
But it had my name — 't was a heart aflame;
It was my valentine.

Stanley Randall gets somewhat mixed in his poetic undertaking. He says in his letter: "It" (meaning the poem) "contains the word 'valentines' in the third line," and so it does. Here are two stanzas. What do you think? Is it a valentine poem?

Oh, Christmas comes once more
With all its joy and fun,
And valentines all in a row—
They make a grand display.

And before the fireside bright and red
We hang our stockings in a row,
So Santa Claws will not forget
To leave us our Christmas goods.

You see, Stanley was thinking so much about Christmas when he wrote that poem that he could n't help it to save his life. We'll forgive him, though, if next time he won't put "claws" on dear old Santa.

Robert Trumbull, age nine, has a kind heart, and remembers poor little Cupid:

Is this Cupid's busy day?
Then he ought to have a valentine.
What do you say?
For he seldom gets one.

Virginia Coryell Craven has a good command of verse, and will write even better lines than these by and by:

What lovely hues of pinks
and blues,
And oh, the flowers so fine!
What thoughts expressed,
what love confessed,
In my sweet valentine!

Graham Hawley, age 13, wastes neither his words nor his opportunities, as you will see:

TO MY SWEETHEART.

I send to you a valentine
To ask you if you will be
mine.

You are the sweetest girl
I know.

I take these means to tell
you so.

I think you're just the
dearest girl

That ever put her hair in
curl.

Of a nicer girl I ne'er have
read.

I'll always be your loving
Ned.

And when I'm grown to be a man,
With a big mustache and lots of tan,
The richest man in all the State,
Then will you be my darling Kate?

For a little girl of twelve these lines by Ruth Getchell are certainly excellent:

The lilies, cowslips, and daisies,
The dandelions, violets, and all,
The sunflowers that bloom in the morning
And hang o'er the old stone wall,

The buttercups, clover, and asters
That are nodding their heads in the grass,
And the primrose that opens at evening
And the mullein that bows as we pass,

Are nodding their heads together,
With dresses of tinted green,
As they sweetly say to each other:
"Ah, surely the rose is our queen!"



"DECEMBER BYWAYS." BY FREDERIC ULLMAN, JR. (SILVER BADGE.)

But now, for another month, we will say good-by to the young poets.

Graham Weller ends his poem with:

At last, when St. Valentine's Day is o'er,
Cupid goes home and closes his door.

And we will "close the door" here, too.

A SAMPLE OF THE MANY LETTERS RECEIVED FROM ST. NICHOLAS READERS.

Hundreds of letters like the following have been received since the November announcement of the St. Nicholas League. We are only sorry that we have not space to print them all.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Inclosed please find stamped and directed envelope, and enroll me as a member of the St. Nicholas League.

I beg leave to add that you were in the family before I was born, and you're in the family yet. I am now seventeen. I often wondered why there was not some organization to bring ST. NICHOLAS readers nearer together; and you can well imagine that I hailed the League's announcement in the November number with the utmost delight.

In closing, please believe me the League's most sincere friend and well-wisher,

ARTHUR THOMAS STRAY.

CHAPTERS.

SPECIAL TO TEACHERS: Chapters of the St. Nicholas League are being formed in many schools, and a number of teachers have taken a kindly interest in these organizations. To all teachers desiring them, League badges and instruction leaflets will be sent post-paid, free of charge.

Sixteen new chapters of the St. Nicholas League had been formed when the December prize competition closed. They are as follows:

No. 8. Ernest Shillabeer, Secretary; President's name not given; nine members. Address, Junior Department Y. M. C. A., Dayton, Ohio.

No. 9. Jessie Chesbro, President; Hinman Strother, Secretary; eleven members. Address, 700 Park Street, Taylorville, Illinois.

No. 10. Elsie Danner, President; Mary Casey, Secretary; thirteen members. Address, Overbrook, Pennsylvania.

No. 11. Louis Caplan, President; Moses Levy, Secretary; seven members. Address, Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

No. 12. "The Petrel," Hubert W. Eldred, President pro tem. Not fully organized. Address, 849 Manhattan Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, Station G.

No. 13. Paul Butterworth, President; Edwin S. Bonnet, Secretary; six members. Address, 64 Hamilton Avenue, Columbus, Ohio. No. 13 ought to be a particularly lucky chapter.

No. 14. Ruth E. Schade, President; Gladys G. Woram, Secretary; five members. Address, 76 Pleasant Street, New Britain, Connecticut.

No. 15. "The Model," Elsie McFarland, President; Roy E. Marsh, Secretary; ten members. Address, Valley City, North Dakota.

No. 16. "The Busy Bee." Officers not reported. Address, Alice Scott, 50 Elliott Row, St. John, New Brunswick.

No. 17. Madeleine Dickie, President; Eleanor Smith, Secretary; five members. Address, 123 Pierrepont Street, Brooklyn, New York.

No. 18. Mary R. Sanford, President; Edith J. Woodruff, Secretary; five members. Address, Redding Ridge, Connecticut.

No. 19. Ruth Bliss, President; Margaret Murdaugh, Secretary; six members. Address, "The Essex," N Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

No. 20. Bessie Dewey, President; Elsie Wells, Secretary; thirteen members. Address, North Easton, Massachusetts, Box 406.

No. 21. Marie Keller, President; Bessie Wheeler, Secretary; five members. Address, 121 Amity Street, Brooklyn, New York.

No. 22. Gordon Ewings, President; Graham Hawley, Secretary; eight members. Address, Tarrytown, New York.

No. 23. Fred J. Brodie, President; Eva Robinson, Secretary; eight members. Address, Evans, New York.

The addresses given are those of the secretaries. In reporting new clubs, the names of officers should always come first, followed by the names of other members, one below the other, and signed by the secretary, with full address. Club number will go with the buttons.



"DECEMBER BYWAYS." BY ERNEST A. BROTHERHOOD.

THE ROLL OF HONOR.

A list of those whose work, though not used, has been found worthy of honorable mention.



BY MARIE VAN LIEW.

POEMS.

Louise Hurlbutt
Irma R. Knight
Shelley E. Bennett
Cuthbert C. Lee
Allan Carroll
Dorothea Davis
Frances Fox
Ivan M. Bernkopf
Lillian I. Bennet
Helen Haines
Ruth Perkins Vickery
Emore Lee
Emma Kellogg Pierce
Harry E. Wheeler
Mary Ayres Leal
Mary Cornly
Alfred Brand
Marian Stewart
Elizabeth Babcock
Helen Nichols
Isabel Henry
Marjorie Turner
Althea Warren

PROSE.

Ina M. Ufford (too long)
Knight Rector
William F. Moore
Eunice Fuller
Mary Louise Newman
George Webb
Henry Kelley Davis

Jennetta M. Scott
Florence Conway Engstrom
Jeannette Palen Hunt
Gladys A. Knight
Elizabeth Gladden Marshall
Sarah Davis Lapeer
Helen E. Smith
Ellen H. Skinner
Frank Flack
Josephine Howes
Marion J. Barton
Frank G. Fahnestock
Ashton B. Collins
Louise Sharp
Marguerite C. Kolo
M. Hayward Post, Jr.
Helen M. Rives
Franklyn Curtiss Wedge

PEN DRAWINGS.

Leonard Bloomfield
G. Hobbs
Carol Bradley
Katherine Denison
Horace L. Gardner
J. M. Cooper
Ellen Burditt McKey
Thomas A. Cox, Jr.
C. A. Greene
J. Dates Purcell
Ruth Osgood

Christine Payson



BY MELTON R. OWEN.

Helen M. Bissell
Florence E. Goldschmidt
Alan M. Osgood
S. Oppen

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Stanley Randall
Alex G. Atworth

Edna M. Duane
Elizabeth Williams
Marian Foster

PUZZLES.

Ella Varick Morrison
Ruth Allaire
Constance Fuller
Clarence B. Georgen
George S. Bringle
Bonnie Lesley Fassett
Mary B. Camp
Adele Howard Halley
Mary F. Watkins
Anna McCandlish
Victoria McCook
Annie Smith
Arthur W. Betts
Lawrence Dinkelspiel
Dorothy Morris
A. B. Silva
A. Bendit
Helen Murphy
Ralph E. Parr

The prize puzzles and list of puzzle-answers will be found in the regular "Riddle-box."



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY EDITH C. BARRY.

Dorothy Ellen Siebs
Julius W. Park
Roger Burlingame
Robert W. Hammatt
Laura C. Westcott

George A. Richardson
M. G. Osborne

TO NEW READERS.

The St. Nicholas League, as explained in the November number, is an organization of ST. NICHOLAS readers.

To any reader of the magazine, or to any one desiring to become such, a League membership badge and an instruction leaflet will be mailed free upon receipt of a written application, accompanied by a self-addressed and stamped envelope.

Every boy and girl should be a reader of "St. Nicholas," and every reader of "St. Nicholas" should be a member of The St. Nicholas League.



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY W. GILBERT SHERMAN.



"IN WINTER-TIME." BY W. H. GLINES.

PRIZE COMPETITION NO. 5.

NOTE.—*Prize Competition No. 5* will close on February 25. The awards will be announced and prize contributions published in ST. NICHOLAS for May.

POEM.—“A Day in the Woods.” This must not contain more than twenty-four lines, and may be either descriptive or narrative, serious or humorous.

PROSE.—“One Day at School.” This must not contain over four hundred words, and should be as nearly the “true story” as the author can remember it.



BY M. C. WOODWORTH.

DRAWING.—“A Winter Evening.” India ink or very black writing-ink must be used, and only white paper. Either indoor or outdoor subject may be selected.

PHOTOGRAPH (not smaller than 3 × 3).—“Our School in Winter.” This may be either an indoor or an outdoor view.

PUZZLE.—The answer must contain the name of some flower that blooms in May.

PUZZLE-ANSWERS.—The best, neatest, and most complete set of answers to the puzzles in this (February) number of ST. NICHOLAS.

If a letter accompanies any contribution it should always be written on a separate sheet.

A SPECIAL PRIZE.

It has been decided to repeat the January special prize offer to encourage the pursuit of game with the camera instead of the gun. Here it is:

For the best photograph of wild animal or bird, taken in its natural home: *First Prize*, five dollars in gold and League gold badge. *Second Prize*, three dollars in gold and League gold badge. *Third Prize*, League gold badge. This competition closes February 25.



BY ELINOR L. DANIELS.

A FEW DON'TS.



BY SARAH HELEN CROLL.

Don't write on both sides of the paper. (See rules.)

Don't draw with lead-pencil or colored inks. (See rules.)

Don't make your stories more than four hundred words in length, nor your poems more than twenty-four lines long. (See rules.)

Don't fail to put your name, age, address, and parent's indorsement on your contribution. (See rules.)

In fact, don't send any contribution until you have “seen” all the rules, including the new rules in the January number, and don't be discouraged if you don't immediately get a prize, or your work published, or even your name on the roll of honor.

Address all applications, letters, and contributions to

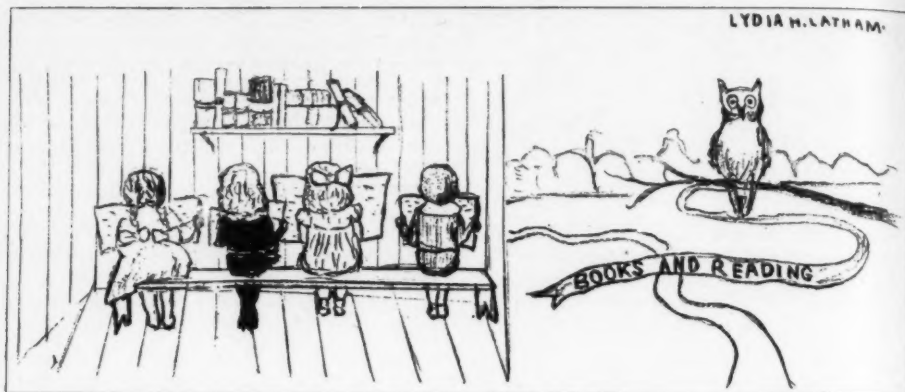
THE ST. NICHOLAS LEAGUE,

Union Square,

New York City.



“IN WINTER-TIME.” BY HARRY PRATT.



OUR heading this month is the work of a young contributor from Indianapolis. We thank her for the drawing, which seems to us very effective, and creditable as the work of a young artist.

The work necessary in preparing the holiday numbers of ST. NICHOLAS has caused a postponement of the publication of the list of "one hundred best books" for young folk, but the list is under way and will appear in the next number. We thank several friends, young and older, for sending in suggestions to aid in making it.

From California this department has received a School Manual containing, among other valuable hints to teachers and scholars, two independent lists of fifty books, or authors, chosen for young readers, and recommended to trustees buying books for school libraries. The first list was selected by the teachers of Riverside County at a meeting held in 1899, and included many of the books already given in the ST. NICHOLAS lists. There were, however, some new titles, such as Jane Andrews's "Seven Little Sisters" and "Ten Boys"; Mrs. Jackson's "Ramona"; "Stories of Olden Time," by James Johonnot; "Beautiful Joe," by Saunders; Parton's "Captains of Industry"; and Hayes's "Cast Away in the Cold." The second list contained some other new names: "The Orcutt Girls," by C. M. Vaile; Jordan's "Matka and Kotik"; Indian stories by E. and

G. Eggleston; Mrs. Richards's "Captain January"; General King's "Cadet Days"; Lummis's "Strange Corners of our Country"; Bayard Taylor's "Boys from Other Countries"; and Dan Beard's "American Boys' Handy Book."

In examining these lists ST. NICHOLAS readers would be surprised to see how many of the stories and writers have been made known to them through this magazine. There are Miss Alcott, Mrs. Burnett, Mrs. Jackson, Eggleston's "Hoosier School-boy," Kipling's "Jungle Stories," Mark Twain, Trowbridge, Mrs. Dodge, John Burroughs, Stockton, Noah Brooks, W. O. Stoddard, Tudor Jenks, John Bennett, Rupert Hughes, William H. Shelton, Thomas Nelson Page, Mrs. Richards, Theodore Roosevelt, C. F. Lummis, Frederick Schwatka, Horace E. Scudder, Howard Pyle, Mrs. Catherwood, and Dan Beard—all well-known contributors to the pages of ST. NICHOLAS, and all contributing one book or more to form this list from our Western shore.

The authors of this pamphlet have found in ST. NICHOLAS much to recommend, and we take pleasure in saying that this School Manual is full of excellent suggestions to all who are interested in children's school-work.

Many a puzzled admirer of Browning's "Ride from Ghent to Aix" has tried to find the historical basis for the poem. No one has found it, as the following letters will prove:

WASHINGTON, D. C., 1899.

To the Editor of ST. NICHOLAS.

DEAR MADAM: In 1882 I was United States consul at Ghent, Belgium. That city is famous for its clubs and societies organized for improvement and pleasure, some of them public, but many of them in quite a private manner. Attending the meeting of one of these societies at a private house, I read, as my contribution to the evening's entertainment, my own translation of Browning's celebrated poem, "The Ride from Ghent to Aix." In the talk which followed, the Gantois present declared their ignorance of any such incident in the history of Ghent; whereupon I took the liberty of writing to Mr. Browning at London, through Mr. Lowell, and in due course received the following reply. I have deposited the letter as an autograph of Mr. Browning in the Historical Department of Iowa at Des Moines.

Very respectfully,

THOMAS WILSON,
United States National Museum,
Washington, D. C.

19 WARWICK CRESCENT, W., Nov. 6, 1882.

DEAR SIR: I have only this morning received (by the kindness of Mr. Lowell) your letter of October 8. In reply to the request it contains, I beg to say that the incident of the "Ride from Ghent" is altogether imaginary. I wrote the poem at sea, on the blank leaf of a book I was reading, when the subject occurred to me, and could only put down hastily the names of the towns as they came into my recollection. The "Low Countries" were the scene of so many more or less significant battles and sieges that I seemed at liberty to indulge my fancy so far.

Pray accept my thanks for the courtesy of your application, and believe me, dear sir,

Yours very faithfully,
ROBERT BROWNING.

TO THOMAS WILSON, Esq.,
United States Consul, Ghent, Belgium.

Let no young reader think that the books called the "best books" will suit every taste, or that any boy or girl must like them all. If you were to go into a picture-gallery or to attend a concert, you would not find that you agreed with others in your tastes for certain pictures or musical compositions. In the same way, a very good book may not suit your taste so well as another book not quite so good. Read, therefore, what you like; but always use your best taste in reading and never your worst.

If you can find an author who just suits you, and is worthy of thorough understanding, —as to which the advice of good critics is valuable,—you will find it a delightful study to acquaint yourself with all that concerns the author. Some will find Cooper a favorite, others Irving, or Scott, or Aldrich, or Longfellow, or Lowell. If you can select an espe-

cial favorite, and become widely acquainted with his or her writings, you will provide yourself with a pleasure that increases with your growth. But one word of warning: Unless your chosen author is an author of genuine merit, you will one day regret the time given to his works.

As to the great authors, be slow to believe that they do not interest you. Since the beginning of literature, there has been one long "battle of the books," in which the strongest have lived. *Strongest*, not *best*. In the course of time those that are best will outlive the others; but strong, moving books outlast those merely harmless, and it is a long struggle before the books that are both good and strong can drive out the strong books that are not good.

We each can help the good books to overcome the less worthy, and when we know how great is the power of a strong book, whether for right or wrong, we shall be eager to assist these better forces in their great fight for life.

A wise man has said that the wonderful power of thought and knowledge comes from the fact that they may be given to others without passing from the giver. Fire starts other fires without being extinguished.

One flame enkindles thousands more,
Yet burns as brightly as before.

But we must remember that, like fire also, thought and knowledge may be spread for mischief as for good.

If any boy or girl wishes to read a book that will tell about any especial heroes or heroines in history, or relate to any period of the history of any nation, let him or her write to this department, for we are sure that among the thousands of its readers will be some one who can give the necessary information that will lead to the right book. Or if the desired book does not exist, perhaps some of the authors in search of a subject will write it!

Unless the eyes are in good condition reading becomes a weariness or an impossi-

bility. Perhaps some young readers will be glad of the hint that the eyes may be relieved from strain by slightly changing the distance at which a book is held. Better yet, if the eyes are easily tired, rest them by looking at objects far away. Glance up from your book and count the trees on a distant hillside, or watch the sail-boats in the bay. The eye-muscles, like those of the hand, tire most quickly when kept in one unchanged position. Of course, real defects of vision must be corrected by oculists; but many a healthy eye is tired by lack of change in its use.

LE BOIS, ST.-ÉTIENNE, FRANCE.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I told you I would send the names of the prettiest French books I read. Here is the list I made:

1. Montluc le Rouge, A. Assolant.
2. Franchise, Mme. Colomb.
3. Les Voyages en Zigzag, Topffer.
4. La Bannière Bleue, Léon Cahun.
5. La Roche aux Mouettes, J. Sandeau.
6. Nous Autres, J. Girardin.
7. A la Rescoussé, Mme. de Witt.
8. Un Nid, Mme. de Witt.
9. Capitaine, Mme. de Nanteuil.
10. Histoire d'un Casse-Noisette, A. Dumas.
11. L'Héritière de Vaucrain, Mme. Colomb.
12. Michel Strogoff, Jules Verne.
13. Les Aventures du Capitaine Magon, Léon Cahun.
14. Un Écolier Hanovrien, A. Lauric.

"Montluc le Rouge" is a story about the French in Canada in the seventeenth century. It is exceedingly pretty; Montluc is so brave, daring, and gay. "Franchise" is the name of a sword. This story takes place in the middle ages, and there are pretty pictures of life in a feudal castle. "Les Voyages en Zigzag" is the very funniest book I ever read. It is impossible not to laugh in reading it. It has, still more, the advantage of being quite true, since it relates the travels in Switzerland and in northern Italy of a boarding-school during the holidays, and it is written by their master himself. I think this book would be rather difficult to understand for those who do not know French very well. "La Bannière Bleue" is very interesting, for it speaks of the Mongols in the time of Témoudjine, and it is altogether a charming story. "La Roche aux Mouettes" is a very touching story with very funny parts, and it is perfectly

well written. "Nous Autres" is the story of a family with nice and naughty children, happy and sad times. I think it very pretty. I like "A la Rescoussé." It is the story of Flora Macdonald and of the expedition of Charles Edward in Scotland. "Un Nid" is also a story of family life. All Mme. de Witt's books are pretty; they are serious and sad, generally. "Capitaine" is the story of a dog. The "Histoire d'un Casse-Noisette" is a fairy-tale. It is quite queer, for it passes from the likely to the marvelous insensibly. It is "Michel Strogoff" that I like best of all J. Verne's books, though I read many of them with great interest, especially "Au Pays des Fourrures," "Le Tour du Monde en Quatre-vingts Jours," "Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant," etc. Captain Magon is a sailor of Tyre. He is a great traveler, and sees King David. "Un Écolier Hanovrien" is the life of a school-boy in a German university. All those books were the joy of my childhood, and now that I am sixteen I read them again with pleasure. Just now some more grown-up books have been read to me. Among those my especial favorite is "Le Chevalier des Touches," by Barbey d'Aurévilly. It is so delightfully written, and it is a story about the Chouans during the Revolution. I have spoken only of French books; now I must add that some of my favorite books are translated from the English: "Misunderstood," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "The Story of a Bad Boy," "Little Women," and, above all, "Hans Brinker." I have been very pleased to learn lately that it was written by the editor of ST. NICHOLAS. I like very much the ST. NICHOLAS, and think the present year prettier yet than the year before. I liked particularly "Trinity Bells" and "The Story of Betty."

Believe me, yours sincerely,
MARGUERITE GRANGER.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I must add a few words to my young sister's letter, to thank you for the good idea of having a "Books and Reading" department. Indeed, I think that reading, and the way of reading, are very important matters for young folks, and you teach them both in a most interesting manner. Some of your articles are so very clever and striking that both my sister and I read them over and over again. Those on Ruskin, on poetry, and on books made expressly to teach were my favorites.

May I tell you a remark I often made in reading? I think the best way with books of value, *really beautiful* books, is to read them with a pen or a pencil in hand, and a note-book ready to write at once what is particularly striking.

Those note-books, carefully preserved, are afterward re-read with much pleasure, and often prove to be real little treasures of one's own making, which are the best of all.

With much regard, I remain
Respectfully yours,
MARIE GRANGER.



THE LETTER-BOX.

THE following letter from the artist who drew the picture appearing as the frontispiece of this number will interest all of our readers:

August 8, 1899.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: The picture about which the inquiry is sent was made by moonlight before the Great Sphinx of Gizeh, Egypt, in 1890. It was one of several studies made for my large oil-painting,—9 x 11 feet,—“The Two Great Eras,” which was, with seven other works, exhibited at the Salon Champ de Mars, 1893. This picture was hung in a conspicuous position, next to the great decoration by Puvion de Chavannes, “The Homage of the City of Paris to Victor Hugo,” and received a medal at the Atlanta Exhibition, 1895; it was shown also at the Omaha Exposition.

I spent two years in Egypt, nine months of which time I lived within a stone's-throw of the great Pyramids and Sphinx of Gizeh, having at my disposal a fine studio in the hotel (Mena House), and using the great Moorish dining-hall for a studio during the summer months.

Thinking that perhaps it might be interesting to children to know a few incidents which really occurred while I was making the picture you refer to, I will add that one evening a jackal (Egyptian wolf) and four foxes were visitors to the Sphinx, walking all over the paws and back of the stone monster. Their eyes glared at me while I sat perfectly quiet in the moonlight. We had for our use a small inclosure not far from the Great Pyramid, just below the tombs, which are covered with hieroglyphics, and are found on the rocky bluff upon which the Great Pyramid of Cheops was built. This inclosure was constructed so that it had no roof, and inside there was a bench all around it, so that we could look over the top to shoot the foxes who came every night looking for refuse from the village.

It was a common sight to see from two to seven or eight foxes at one time prowling about these dump-heaps, and once in a while an Egyptian wolf and many wild dogs—vicious beasts. The moonlight in Egypt is so brilliant that I executed the drawing without artificial light, the moon furnishing all the illumination for my work.

ERIC PAPE.

HERE is a letter that leaves off in the most interesting part:

RYE BEACH, N. H.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I have a toy boat seventeen inches long. I take her away down on the rocks and sail her. One day a friend of mine fell in.

Your loving reader, WALTON SMITH.

BESSIE MARCH sends this from the Holy Land:

HADETH, MOUNT LEBANON, SYRIA.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: You have been a member of our family for six years, and we enjoy you very much.

There are six of us children, from the sixteen-year-old brother to the little three-year-old.

Our eldest brother is now on his way to America; we miss him very much.

In summer it is so warm in Tripoli, where we live, that we come up to the mountains.

This place is between four and five thousand feet above the sea. It takes us about eight hours on the road.

My little sister and brother, Alice and Harold, come up in large boxes which are tied on the sides of the mule. They have pillows and sheepskins to sit on, so they do not get tired out; the swaying of the mule makes it very easy to go to sleep. It is one of the most exciting times of the whole year.

While in Tripoli, not long before we came up here, we went to visit the whirling dervishes. It was very interesting to see them whirl in their long white gowns. These gowns had some weights in the hem of the skirts, so that, when they whirled, they stood out all around like a great bell. They whirled three times, the first two times for five minutes without stopping, and the last time for ten minutes. They kept their eyes half shut while whirling. These dervishes are a fanatical sect of the Moslems.

Your faithful reader, BESSIE MARCH.

WE are delighted to show our readers this cheery and beautiful letter from a brave girl:

DETROIT, MICH.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Would you like to know how much comfort you have brought to a little invalid?

When I was six years old I fell off a stone wall and hurt my back. I am thirteen now, and since that time I have not walked a step.

I travel north as far as my chair, or make an eastern trip to my couch, but I spend most of my time in Bedland.

I have a very dear friend who is an editor, and who never forgets that crooked girls have more time to review magazines than lazy men. So he sends me a big bundle every month. I have the “Century,” “Harper’s,” “Scribner’s,” “Youth’s Companion,” “Bird Talk,” “Bookman,”—ten in all,—but I love my ST. NICHOLAS best because I have known it the longest. I was five when I saw my first number, and I have never missed a month since. And because you have brought me just one hundred days of comfort (besides the fun of re-reading) since I knew you, I decided that I would write and thank you. Sometimes when the pain is the worst, I can almost forget it if you are there.

You must not think me a helpless invalid, for I’m not. I make lots of care for other people, but I’m not so much of a “dromedary” that I’m not happy myself. My books are my greatest comfort. Next to these are my pictures, for my walls are covered. I have a beautiful collection of photographs of the Madonnas, which I have mounted myself—I have fifty-two in all. I keep three scrap-books—one of poetry, one of the Spanish war, and one a miscellaneous assortment of pictures, jokes, and items of interest. These keep me pretty busy.

I have never been to Sunday-school or to school in my life, but yet I am enrolled as a member of both. I study lessons at home just the same as the class, and am promoted with the rest. Sometimes I am not able to work, and have to let my lessons go, but I can always make it up during vacations, you see. My tutor is one of the high-school teachers, and I am a freshman.

But the school I love best is the kindergarten. Three doors north of my home is a public kindergarten, which is another of my blessings. For the children pass my window so often that they all know me, and never go by without waving their little hands and smiling. When the weather is warm enough they open their doors and sing for me, and they send me little baskets and daisy

chains. There are eighty-five children, and I know every one by name. I make little paper toys and drop them out of my window, and then—guess how they pay me! Every morning at half-past nine they sing a little song about how much they want me to get well. It is called "Prayer for a Sick Child," and it was their own idea. If I ever do get well I shall always think that it was the children who made me so. And even if I don't, it makes me happy. When I get well and strong, I am going to be a kindergartner myself, for I love it so.

I have lots of comforts in this world: my gray pussy cat "Isaiah"; my two canaries, "Mr. Cheeryble" and "Meh Lady"; my mandolin, which I thrum when my arms are "willin'"; and my sketch-book and diary, neither of which would be of interest to any one else, but which I enjoy keeping up.

I don't do things very well, but I am trying to be as much alive and like other people as possible. Perhaps if I do my share of getting well, the Lord will be more willing to help me. I have written all about myself, but you must forgive me, for I have n't very many other things to write of.

If you knew how much your dear magazine was to me, how many dark hours it has helped to hurry along, and how much cheer and comfort it has brought into my sick-room, you would be glad you helped to write it.

Your loving little reader, JOYCE SHELTON.

HERE is an excellent account of a really interesting occurrence:

"THE CEDARS," WELLESLEY, MASS.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am going to tell you about a baby woodpecker (or flicker) I caught last summer. One day, as I was out walking, I heard peeps of a young bird in distress. Going to the spot, I found a tiny little woodpecker, which I picked up and carried home. We put him in a large cage, and finding he was too small to eat for himself, we fed him ourselves in this way: he opened his beak, and we thrust the food down. So it continued for a day or so, until we let him out to hop on the lawn and gravel walk. He would go up a tree and stay there all day, coming down when he was hungry for his food in the house. He would climb up the screen door and cry until some one came and let him in. Then he would sit in our laps and hold his mouth open while we thrust the food in. Strawberries were his favorite food, but bread was his usual fare. If we came out and called him, he was up in the tree, he would fly down and light on our shoulders. We let him stay outdoors one night, and early in the morning we heard cries, and there was a woodpecker attacking him. Our bird flew down on the lawn, and one of us saw him and rushed down to save him. He ran under her skirts, and as the other bird flew away uttered a sharp little cry, as much as to say, "Now come and fight me, if you dare!" Whenever we went to walk he went with us, perching on our shoulders, and flying from one to another as we walked, accompanied by the dog, who ran by our side and was a very good friend of the bird—at least, we thought so. But one day we went to walk, and put the flicker down for a moment while we picked strawberries, and all of a sudden we heard a cry from the bird and a growl from the dog, and then all was still. We rushed to the spot, and there lay our little darling stretched on the ground, his beautiful golden wings outspread, and part of his head bitten off. We buried him

very solemnly, while many tears were shed over him; and so ended the life of our little bird.

Yours truly, CHRISTIANA S. HUNNEWELL.

Archibald G. Smith, a little reader whose hands are paralyzed, sends a charming letter written for him by his mother. He has traveled much, and owns an amusing pet monkey.

Jessie E. and Elsie L. Anderson send two letters with clever rhymes inclosed; but the letters are too long to print.

H. B. Peirce writes from St. Petersburg, Russia, where he attends a German school.

Charles McCann is in Paris, and complains that the French boys do not know how to play—that "they have not enough go about them"; but he admits that the Bois de Boulogne has good bicycle roads.

Jeanette Ives Hoskins is a missionary's daughter at Zahleh, Syria, and would be glad to hear from some little American friends.

Eleanor H. Murdock lets us see some amusing rhymes written about her pet dog.

Mrs. Mary Roe Sanford writes that she was measured with "Tom Thumb" when she was less than two years old, and was nearly as tall as he—though he was then ten.

Margaret Delisle Gentle thanks us for printing her letter from New South Wales, and her brother Robert, ten years old, sends an interesting letter about the rabbit-pest.

Harriet H. Thomson's letter comes from Maryland, with a little poem on "Snowflakes." We thank her for letting us read it.

Georgie E. Kalman also sends us a poem, entitled "Haying-time."

Rebecca A. Hunt gives a jolly description of a holiday on a farm.

Mildred Day Potter tries to raise the question whether the year 1900 is in the twentieth century; but her letter shows that she knows better.

Eda Schwarz writes a correct rendering of the long German word in the November "Letter-box." She says "Winterthurerhandwerksburschenvorwärtsgrüpe" means, the "Progressive Society for the Young Mechanics of Winterthur"—a city on the Rhine.

Karl Mann sends a very interesting little letter, and we thank him for it. It tells about his experiences with pets—but we hear so much about pet animals!

Juanita and Dolores Gomez are two Brazilian girls who write that they enjoy St. NICHOLAS greatly.

AND here is a list of good friends whose letters are not be otherwise acknowledged than by our thanks:

Janet Chesley, Livingston Fountain (who tells of finding an Indian arrowhead in New York city), Emily McLean, Anna L. Clarkson, Mary F. Watkins, Sarah Ethel C. Breed, Marian Martin, Julia Hurd, Sarah Easton, Louie Suinney, Sara Tyler, Elsie Snow, Grace Phelps, William Geary, Frederica Going, Nathaniel Taylor, Everingham Noble, Willard A. Banks, Arthur G. Gooch, Hettie L. Dalzell, Ernest La Prade, Tom McCall, A. W. Betts, Helen Sanders, Marian Shaw, Grace Lawes, Edna Bennet (who writes an excellent hand, though she has been to school only two months in all), Ruth Eleanor Jones, Julia Robey, E. M. and L. B., Marjorie Hanson, Paul H. Prausnitz (who was in the Isle of Wight when the memorial cross to Tennyson was built), Esther E. Robbins (whose little letter is very welcome), Mildred C. Smith, Ona Kraft, Ruth Collins, Allyn R. J., Esther Dunwoody, and Louis Somerville—the last being a very recent subscriber.



ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE JANUARY NUMBER.

SUBSTITUTIONS.

No more the warbling waters roll;
Deserts of snow fatigue the eye,
Black storms involve the lowering sky,
And gloomy damps oppress the soul.

ST. ANDREW'S CROSS OF DIAMONDS. I. 1. B. 2. Are. 3. Brown. 4. Ewe. 5. N. II. 1. N. 2. Lot. 3. Noted. 4. Ten. 5. D. III. 1. N. 2. Eat. 3. Naked. 4. Ted. 5. D. IV. 1. N. 2. Vat. 3. Named. 4. Tea. 5. D. V. 1. D. 2. Did. 3. Dives. 4. Den. 5. S.

CONUNDRUM-CHARADE. Lap-pet.

CONCEALED CENTRAL ACROSTIC. Centrals, Children. 1. Nicer. 2. Other. 3. Think. 4. Salem. 5. Madam. 6. Rarer. 7. There. 8. Sands.

CHARADE. Ek-ten-u-ate.

A ROMAN PUZZLE. 1. Comic. 2. Vivid. 3. Doll. 4. Mild.

TO OUR PUZZLERS: Answers, to be acknowledged in the magazine, must be received not later than the 15th of each month, and should be addressed to ST. NICHOLAS "Riddle-box," care of THE CENTURY CO., 33 East Seventeenth St., New York City.

ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER were received, before November 15th, from Hildegard G.—Joe Carlada—Richard K. Stanwood—Kent Shaffer—"Dondy Small"—Kathrine Forbes Liddell—Allil and Adi—Anita Brown.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE NOVEMBER NUMBER were received, before November 15th, from Paul Reese, 7—Marie V. Kilbourne, 1—Edwina Dobbins, 2—Fred W. McKown, 3—Frances Richardson, 7—Howard V. Vergin, 7—A. Musgrave Hyde, 4—Edith E. Osgood, 7—Jessie McMechan, 7—Edith M. Thompson, 7—Sarah Lewison, 7—Jessie C. Chase, 2—R. B. Rives, 1—Florence and Edna, 2—"Anti-Thayer Co.," 7—Mabel M. Johns, 7—Marguerite Sturdy, 6—"Hen, Raggy, and Baby," 1—"Die Herm Collegen," 6—Edith L. Lauer, 7—Phebe, Julia, and Marion Thomas, 4.

RHYMED ANAGRAM.

FROM the letters which form the first omitted word
ay be formed the other omitted words.

The ships I used to **** with joyous expectations
e sunk like **** beneath the waves of hope. I
* a blow at glad anticipations, and in the **** of
rddid deprivations I **** my melancholy life—and
nope. A. G. MUNRO.

CENTRAL ACROSTIC.

ALL the words described contain an uneven number
etters. When rightly guessed, the central letters will
ell the name of a place in which is located a famous
stitution.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. An outdoor game. 2. To creep.
Defensive arms for the body. 4. A kind of berry.
5. Part of an easy chair. 6. Silent. 7. A medal. 8.
Donsters. 9. An insect. ARTHUR W. DUNWELL.

FAMOUS NICKNAMES.

(Second Prize, St. Nicholas League Competition)

THE initials of the following names will spell the name
of an illustrious American.

1. The surname of one who was called "The Grand
Old Man." 2. The surname of one who was called
"The Apostle to the Indians." 3. The name of one
who was called "The Wonder of the World." 4. The
name of one who was called "The Incurruptible." 5.
The name of one who was named "The Lion of the
North." 6. "The Invincible Soldier." 7. The sur-
name of "The Iron Duke." 8. The surname of "The
Old Man Eloquent." 9. The surname of "The Great

5. Clod. 6. Doom. 7. Viol. 8. Mood. 9. Dodo. 10. Mill.
11. Mix. 12. Ox.

AN ANIMAL HUNT. 1. Ape-nines. 2. Dog-ate. 3. Camel-ot.
4. Cat-alpa. 5. Hog-shead. 6. Ox-ygen. 7. Pig-ment. 8.
Ram-parts. 9. Stag-e. 10. Horse-radish. 11. Lamb-ent. 12.
Rat-ion.

OBLIQUE RECTANGLE. 1. M. 2. Sea. 3. Meant. 4. Andas.
5. Tatta. 6. Stack. 7. Accol. 8. Kolos. 9. Leath. 10. Stums.
11. H. M. S. 12. S. From 1 to 2, Santa Claus.

NOVEL DOUBLE ACROSTIC. Third row, Webster; sixth row,
Audubon. CROSS-WORDS: 1. Sewerage. 2. Preclude. 3. Sub-
sided. 4. Residium. 5. Fitiable. 6. Freehold. 7. Marinet.

A CHRISTMAS CANDLE. From 1 to 2, Christmas; 3 to 4, New
Year's Day; 5 to 6, Mistletoe. CROSS-WORDS: 1. N. 2. Sea. 3.
Cow, am. 4. Hayti. 5. Recla. 6. Inapt. 7. Sural. 8. Taste.
9. Midst. 10. Matador. 11. Style.

American Commoner." 10. "The Father of History."
11. A name given to Ninetta Crummles. 12. "The
Little Corporal." 13. "The Prince of Poets." 14.
The surname of "Old Rough and Ready." 15. The
surname of "The Liberator." 16. The surname of
"The King-maker." WALTER C. HOLMES.

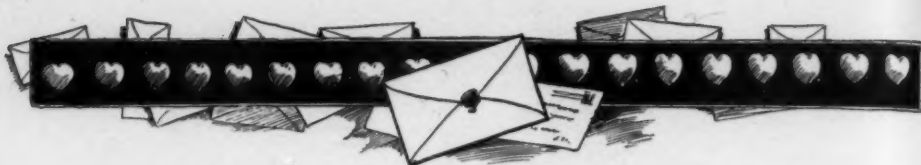
LAMP PUZZLE.



CROSS-WORDS: 1. Part of a skillet. 2. To recede.
3. In good season. 4. To expand. 5. Certain large
quadrupeds. 6. Immortal. 7. A loud or emphatic
utterance. 8. A certain tree. 9. Banishment. 10.
A fop. 11. To surpass. 12. A long space of time.
13. To shut out. 14. Perpetually.

The central letters, represented by stars, will, when
read downward, spell the name of a famous man.

ANGUS M. BERRY.



HEART PUZZLE.



- CROSS-WORDS: 1. Missiles used by Cupid (six letters).
 2. A county of California (ten letters). 3. Disclosures.
 4. To outweigh. 5. Sensible. 6. Utensils made of
 baked clay. 7. The act of presenting. 8. One of the
 signs of the zodiac. 9. Preëminence. 10. Fitness.
 11. A spring flower. 12. To intrust. 13. Fatigued.
 14. A division of time. 15. In February.

From 1 to 2, two words that greet us at every turn.

ANGUS M. BERRY.

CHARADE.

MY *first* is often seen about a wreck,
 And, most important, ornaments a neck;
 'T is oft a traveled highway stretching far
 Where never any friendly footpaths are.

MY *second* is a bound; without delay
 It leaves its native soil and runs away;
 It ever seeks my *first* and far and wide
 It scatters flowers in the country-side.

MY *whole* is aye the secret source of power
 That never fails to note the passing hour;
 It prompts the hands to action's busy round
 And gives a face a meaning all profound.

ANNA M. PRATT.

CENTRAL ACROSTICS.

(First Prize, St. Nicholas League Competition.)

I.

EACH word described contains the same number of letters. When rightly guessed, and written one below another, the central letters will spell the name of a famous battle.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. Part of a church. 2. A substance formerly much used by jewelers. 3. Odor. 4. General tendency. 5. A fastening. 6. A low, moaning sound. 7. Parts of a chain.

II.

Each word described contains the same number of letters. When rightly guessed, and written one below

another, the central letters will spell the name of a famous battle.

CROSS-WORDS: 1. A predictor. 2. A small fruit. 3. A chief city. 4. To advise. 5. A musical entertainment. 6. Something used by painters. 7. A famous magazine. 8. Permitted. 9. An assembly of men summoned for consultation.

MARIAN JOHNSON.

RIDDLE.

To be answered by two words pronounced alike but spelled differently:

Among the roses' fragrant hordes

I lift my head;

Upon the desperate gamblers' boards

I make my bed.

Brave men, to insure your happy lot,

Have died by me,

While on the table, smoking hot,

My form you see. M. E. FLOYD.

DIAMONDS CONNECTED BY A CENTRAL SQUARE.



I. UPPER DIAMOND: 1. In orthoëpy. 2. A public conveyance. 3. Inhuman. 4. A wind instrument. 5. To repel. 6. Portion. 7. In orthoëpy.

II. LEFT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In orthoëpy. 2. A large serpent. 3. A tree. 4. To paint the likeness of. 5. Pungent. 6. Possessed. 7. In orthoëpy.

III. CENTRAL SQUARE: 1. A stratum. 2. A place of public contest. 3. A frothy substance. 4. To follow. 5. Charges.

IV. RIGHT-HAND DIAMOND: 1. In orthoëpy. 2. Fiery. 3. An expression of triumph. 4. An electric fish. 5. To walk with a stately step. 6. To augment. 7. In orthoëpy.

V. LOWER DIAMOND: 1. In orthoëpy. 2. Part of a wheel. 3. Detested. 4. Protecting. 5. Under. 6. A bird. 7. In orthoëpy.

M. A. STREVER.

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